EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

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Stories and storytelling praxes play a significant role across space-time and provide the foundation for this book. Judy Rohrer offers one perspective in *Staking Claim: Settler Colonialism and Racialization in Hawai'i*. "[W]e are," she claims, "the set of stories we tell ourselves, the stories that tell us, the stories others tell about us, and the possibilities of new stories" (189). At the micro level, stories attune all individuals to an inheritance, our historical bodies inseparable and determined by historical, social, and cultural forces of the world. Though we are all heirs to what is passed down to us, this inheritance un/settles individuals differently. Some are settled in/to that inheritance, benefiting from certain privileges (broadly conceived). Others are unsettled and haunted by it: *thrown* into a world of haunted/ing inheritances and dwellings; *forced* to return to and learn how to address oneself to hauntings; imperiled to carefully reckon with how to cultivate *situated knowledges* (Haraway) and *theories in the flesh* (Moraga and Anzaldúa) out of haunting situations. Stories and hauntings both un/settle and help individuals know themselves.

Stories also work at the meso level. They can attune individuals to what is collectively inherited: collective memories, cultural histories, and political economies. This inheritance, too, constitutes communities differently. Some are settled in/to wounded/ing spaces and places (Till), benefiting from the privilege of not having to know its histories of settler displacement, de-territorialization, and re-territorialization. Others are unable to separate their identity from, and thus are more attuned to, its effects and consequences: *thrown* into its generational cycle of hauntings; *forced* to contend with the specificities and particularities in which hauntings haunt; *imperiled* to hold hope and struggle as two paradoxical realities within their stories-so-far. In *For Space*, cultural geographer Doreen Massey presents the concept of stories-so-far to reflect what is struggled over and what can be hoped for with-others (9). That is to say, though hauntings and haunting

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situations demand returns and careful reckonings, even though meaning is to be gained out of both, there is a hope and struggle for a being-and-becoming otherwise (Kirsch and García). Stories-so-far are communal relations that provide insight into the historical struggles of and for new beginnings and futures.

Stories function at the macro level, too. They attune individuals and communities to societal inheritances: co-histories, trajectories, interrelations, and futures. This inheritance, however, is unlike other inheritances mentioned in that it unsettles singular versions or interpretations of what it means to be haunted or even who can be haunted. Humanity and society's story is a palimpsest narrative of constellated hauntings and wounded/ing spaces and places whether made visible and audible or not. Hauntings live deep in the bones and are not just derived from inheritances but are themselves *structures of feelings*—a force felt every day in Society. Raymond Williams and Avery Gordon might say hauntings are initially inaudible and lifeless. Both attribute this to difference and the choice to readjust the senses. The difference that constitutes humanity has been accounted for above, but it is the latter that situates all on a demand. Haunted/ing stories can help all of humanity come to terms with the demand for something else: to hear, to see, and to recognize and acknowledge the demands of hauntings and ghosts themselves.

The listening conceived in this volume is part of the everyday. It does not belong to the disciplines of the university any more than it belongs to others who inform its contents, terms, and meaning within a given community. Yet, readers might find that the listening advanced in this collection invites a rhetorical standpoint insofar that meaning is exchanged; a materialist framework considering bodily and historical happenings occur; and a decolonial perspective seeing that "community" and "listening" have been typically defined in books, at the detriment of others, by those who engage in certain rhetorical activities. Like hauntings, community listening is a shared structure of feeling and thought that attunes: *I am where I do and thin*k. It may be imperceptible and yet its everyday language, grammar, and meaning are embodied, experienced, and practiced. To have stories, hauntings, and community listening as a point-of-reference is to situate oneself at the nexus of stories-so-far and the possibilities of new stories *otherwise*.

Readers might find in this collection that community listening is like absence and/or a textual trace. It has many stories, forms of rhetoricity, and recipients spanning space-time. Community listening has set precedents, confirmed conventions, informed human projects, and compelled consensus. It has seeded, materialized, and circulated precarious stories-so-far and unknown possibilities of new stories to be told, retold, remembered, and reimagined. Community listening is rife with hauntings. What would it mean for all of humanity to begin a listening-with community from the point-of-reference of hauntings?

Community listening is not an attempt to reconcile differences under the same contents and terms but rather is an invitation to engage in what María Lugones refers to as playful world-traveling, a mutual determination, or what Nelson Maldonado-Torres calls a generous reciprocity towards *being-with* others *otherwise*. It is the hope of this collection to extend an invitation to all to listen, deeply and slowly, so as to travel into other worlds presented by contributors not because ethics or morals say so but because a choice has been made to begin elsewhere and otherwise on the principle of relation-ing and reciprocity.

Community listening generates more questions than answers. It makes intelligible the "so-far" in stories-so-far and yet makes illegible a singular direction. This volume animates stories of community listening across personal stories, family stories, and workplace stories: a classroom, a campus reading circle, or a university archive to a prison, a community center, a cemetery, or anywhere it's possible to catch a particular radio broadcast. It is less about foreclosing on definitions of community listening and more about an invitation to become enmeshed in the patterns of its praxis and the kinds of labor it entails: somatic, affective, intellectual, and otherwise. Stories-so-far and possibilities of new stories form an essential focus of this collection on, about, being-with, and thinking from community listening.

COMMUNITY LISTENING IN ACADEMIC CONTEXTS

While community listening does not belong to the academy or originate in its classrooms and labs, this volume is part of ongoing work to surface community listening in academic contexts, including research and scholarship, teaching, and community-engaged work. As editors, we three—Jenn, Lauren, and Romeo—see great value in amplifying the questions that community listening raises: about communicative praxes and relations; about human (and nonhuman) endeavors to listen in community; about the technical and ethical aspects of engaging in, with, and from community listening, whatever our roles (e.g., practitioners, students, teachers). We especially appreciate that such work has only just begun.

The first concerted effort to collect academic accounts of community listening was a special issue of *Community Literacy Journal* published in 2018. An outgrowth of the 2017 Conference on Community Writing, this issue introduced community listening to readers in relation to a cadre of feminist scholars, drawing attention to its resonances with several other listening praxes (Fishman and Rosenberg). Issue 13.1 of *Community Literacy Journal* also framed and reframed community listening as a combined invitation and dare. Instead of prescribing a single approach to the study of community listening, the issue asked: ¿donde

comenzamos? (García). Through a series of specific, specifically located examples, contributors offered possible starts, hoping to improve the ability of teachers, scholars, and activists to enact it together (Stone). They identified the work before the work (Rowan and Cavallaro), including empathic listening(Lohr and Lindenman); they linked writing-to-listen with the rhetorical labor involved in community partnerships that cross boundaries (Hinshaw); and they showcased how community listening lends itself to enduring stories as well as the endurance of storytellers and their audiences (Jackson with DeLaune). Together, these examples answer the question of where to begin, encouraging readers to do the work wherever and whenever they can.

Continuing and expanding these conversations, this volume does more than offer additional examples. In the pages that follow contributors confirm the interrelationship of listening and storytelling, and they complicate our knowledge of these activities as entangled means of seeing, being, and doing. Rather than asking "Where do we start this time?" this volume queries: "What has been done? What is being done? And what might be done next?" While each chapter explores different answers, together they strike familiar chords. Among rhetorical arts, speaking and writing may have prominence, but listening, like reading, taste, and silence, has powerful cultural presence. Since the early twentieth century, it has garnered attention from scholars and teachers committed to intervening in critical and pedagogical praxes. Community listening, in many ways then, serves as a locus of and for the iterative work of starting and restarting, while storytelling is the vessel through which community listening is (re)made.

Cosmologies of Listening

As an object of inquiry, listening eludes easy capture. An embodied act, it can look like the turn of a head or the twitch of an ear. Some bodies crouch on high alert when they are listening; others relax into sound. Plants engage in sonic call and response, while animals, including the symbol-using and -misusing kind, add gestures for aid and emphasis. Picture a curved hand cupped to the side of the head. Idiomatically, listening is transactional: Lend me your ear. Pay attention. Take heed! As auditors, we listen up, we listen in, and we listen to all kinds of things: the wind, the radio, the tone of voice of an interlocutor. More metaphorically, we encourage listening to reason, experience, authority, our hearts, our bodies, our better angels, and the true meaning behind what someone else is saying. Like other communicative acts, listening is social and it is relational. Listening is also mediated, and not just by tech. Fraught with imperfections, listening is enmeshed in lived experience, and as such it is inflected by individual quirks, available resources, and systemic arrangements of power. Rife with here

and now, listening is as attuned to then and there as it is replete with possibilities, intended and otherwise.

Across disciplines, when teachers and scholars make listening their focus, enriching instruction or advancing knowledge is often the aim. A brief survey of named types of listening suggests the scope of activity. Appropriately enough, there is academic listening (Richards; Powers), and there is attentive or active listening (Rogers and Farson; Zelko). It extends to critical and cooperative listening, which can be found in a variety of artistic, educational, and professional settings. There is also civic listening, understood as both a facet of organizational listening (Capizo and Feinman) and a reciprocal means of circulating civic knowledge (Schmoll). The arts invite us to engage in deep listening (Oliveros) along with close and distant listening. The former extends attention, for example, from a published version of a poem to "the poet's own performances" of it and, thus, the "total" sound of the work, and the relation of sound to semantics" (Bernstein 4); the latter uses digital tools to turn noise into configurations that are open to interpretation (Clement). While language learners work on extensive and intensive listening, and educators strive to create optimal scaffolding, people across sectors work on empathic listening. Popularized in the early 90s as one of seven habits of "highly effective people" (Covey), empathic listening has been identified since the mid-2010s as not just a constructive civic response to political division and divisiveness but also a solution to it, whether a means of becoming more resilient (Scudder) or building connection and trust across differences (Andolina and Conklin).

In rhetorical studies, listening is omnipresent even if it is not always privileged or prominent at all levels (i.e., micro, meso, macro). Historically, listening and other forms of reception, such as reading and taste, are often actively distrusted or downplayed, while speaking and writing are associated with social and political agency and regarded as expressions of power as well as authority and domination. Even more fundamentally, speaking and writing are aligned, even elided, with thinking and, thus, with being human and having related rights. Histories of literacies and literate cultures show us how knowledge of speaking and writing is valued. Both are markers of genius, expertise, and professional acumen; individually and together, they signal talent, training, and hard work. On a broader scale, the intensity of conflicts that arise—clashes over free speech, freedom of the press, and access to information—offers yet another measure of the power attributed to speech and the recorded word. Of course, speaking and writing are nothing without uptake, and that makes listening a *sine qua non* of the *ars rhetoricae*. To gain a greater sense, in future projects we might turn to big data analyses. Whether scholars mine primary or secondary texts, we anticipate the resulting visualizations of the language we have used to evoke, describe,

and analyze listening will give us a "network sense" of how, so far, listening has shaped the "maturing discipline" of rhetoric and composition (Mueller 159).

Browsing back issues of the *International Journal of Listening* (*IJL*) offers further perspectives. Founded in 1987 as *The Journal of the International Listening Association*, this publication was established not only "to share . . . knowledge," but also to encourage "new understanding, new discovery, and new application of information about listening," and to promote participation by providing "an active, moving force that, through its contribution toward communication effectiveness, will ultimately lead to better relationships among people everywhere" (Smith 1). Issue 1.1 leads with a trio of articles by senior scholars from across rhetorical studies. The first, "Listening–Ubiquitous Yet Obscure" by James I. Brown, opens with a timeline of previous firsts: the first published article on listening in a modern or "familiar" sense, 1912; the first major study of listening, a 1926 dissertation; the first national professional committee on listening, 1952; and so on (Brown 3). Together with "Manipulation versus Persuasion" by Ralph G. Nichols and "Someone Should Do Something About That (A Comment about Listening Research)" by Carl H. Weaver, the journal sounds a call for interventions that subsequent work answers mainly through empirical research plus occasional scholarship on listening aesthetics, histories, and theories. Nearly four decades later, the *IJL* continues in a similar vein. Now a genuinely international publication, it almost exclusively features empirical work that aims to improve how listening is understood as cognitive activity, as teachable (and testable) skills, and as socially and culturally situated behavior with discernible impacts.

There is also a great deal of listening scholarship that lies beyond the scope of the *IJL*. In particular, since the late 1990s scholars in rhetoric and adjacent fields have been interested in how listening and action connect (or can be connected), especially in response to signal imperatives: survival, reconciliation, peace. Rather than a single corpus, scholarship in this category might be better pictured as a night sky filled with celestial bodies, some blinking like fires lit at a great distance, others shining steadily as if close by. We recognize the academic impulse to at least try to catalog or index this vast work; we also imagine making selections from it, as if preparing a table of contents for a proposed volume in the Landmark Essays Series. Here, however, in this volume, we encourage readers to join us in considering some of the many groupings it is possible to create among scholarship on listening and action. As Andrea Riley-Mukavetz explains in "Our Story Begins Here: Constellating Cultural Rhetorics," "It's through listening to decolonial scholars that we've come to understand the making of cultures and the practices that call them into being as *relational* and *constellated*" (Act I, Scene 2). She adds, "The practice of constellating gives us a visual metaphor for those relationships that honors all possible realities," noting with her coauthors: "It

also allows for different ways of seeing any single configuration within that constellation, based on positionality and culture." Listening and action are always already in constellation.

In this spirit, we turn our focus below to some of the constellations we see within turn-of-the-millennium and more recent listening scholarship. Guiding our practice is our abiding interest in identifying and exploring some of the interrelations among extant listening scholarship and emergent work.

Listening Attunements

When we look into the night sky, depending on where we stand and with whom, we see outlines of humans and animals, ghosts and gods. By naming and storying such constellations, we make meaning both of and with them. Some stories persist, while their formats and meanings multiply. Other stories live in briefer moments, their timelines not always a measure of their impact. When we consider scholarship on listening in our discipline, work on rhetorical listening is one of the most prominent and complex configurations. Even before the publication of *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness* by Krista Ratcliffe, there was considerable engagement with her key terms (e.g., rhetorical listening, rhetorical eavesdropping), and subsequent publications steadily followed, including *Silence and Listening as Rhetorical Arts*, which Ratcliffe edited with Cheryl Glenn; *Rhetorics of Whiteness: Postracial Hauntings in Popular Culture, Social Media, and Education*, which Ratcliffe edited with Tammy Kennedy and Joyce Irene Middleton; and *Rhetorical Listening in Action*, which Ratcliffe authored with Kyle Jensen.

In outer space, through mass and gravity, stars enable communication among planets through gravitational lensing, a phenomenon that allows for the transmission (and reception) of messages across timespace. In rhetorical scholarship on listening, communiqués travel across constellations at different frequencies, and sometimes they overlap or converge. In "Rhetorical Listening: A Trope for Interpretive Invention and a 'Code of Cross-Cultural Conduct,'" for example, Ratcliffe introduces rhetorical listening in conversation with Jacqueline Jones Royster's scholarship. Their relations, forged through inspiration on the part of Ratcliffe (103) and through intertextual exchanges between Ratcliffe and Royster, point to additional constellations that center Royster's work along with African American women writers and their ancestors; their literacy practices, including listening; and the worlds they strive to create through the texts they circulate. By contrast, there seems to be very little direct messaging among constellations that center rhetorical listening and those that center Linda Flower's scholarship and praxes. Consistently collaborative and rooted in both

literacy and rhetorical studies, Flower's work is, nonetheless, key to contextualizing community listening and understanding its affinity for community writing and community-engaged academic work more broadly.

Throughout her career's work, Flower brings steady attention to listening as not only a consequential practice that can be learned but also an essential aspect of effective inclusive communication. The importance of listening is consistently apparent in her collaborations with students, colleagues, and community members through initiatives like the Community Think Tank and the Community Literacy Center. In addition, in "Drawing on the Local: Collaboration and Community Expertise," Flower and Shirley Brice Heath report on a project that focused on listening and, specifically, listening to community partners. Working with nearly two hundred university and community stakeholders, Flower and Heath sought mainly to teach faculty and students "not simply how to hear" local experts but also how to listen to them and, in doing so, "construct a transformative understanding" (44). Fundamentally, what Flower and Heath taught was rivaling, which Flower, Lorraine Higgins, and Elenore Long describe as a means for "people [to] explore open questions through an analysis of multiple perspectives and evidence" (4). Rivaling is both a stance and a set of activities. It involves inquiry, which is a very concrete form of uptake, and it involves listening, which is an embodied critical and intellectual act. Thus, rivaling "takes one beyond merely considering available alternative understandings to actively seeking them out"; it also entails "eliciting rivals that might remain silent," "striving to comprehend them," and "embracing the difficulty of talking across difference" to gain a sense of "a more multi-faceted reality" ("Intercultural" 257).

When such brief but representative examples from Flower's work are constellated with community listening, key aspects of both are cast in relief. For Flower, community literacy names the transformative public force that university and community members co-create when they work together on problem-driven, solution-seeking intercultural inquiry. Rivaling, the practice of "seeking rival hypotheses" that drives such collaborations, is an academic invention informed by scientific method and pragmatism (cf. Dewey, West). However, as Flower makes clear in *Learning to Rival*, *Community Literacy*, and elsewhere, rivaling can be taught, and through instruction, it can become an everyday activity that helps people identify and articulate the complexity of their own and others' experiences along with issues and circumstances that contribute to problems they wish to solve. As such, rivaling is an antecedent to other teachable listening stances and tactics. Indeed, listening is the means by which rivals empathetically attune to differences, including those voiced by direct participants and those sounded by available texts (*Community Literacy* 57). Like all literacy activities, both rivaling and community listening reflect cultural contexts and social frameworks; both

are also closely calibrated to the discursive and immediate, lived contexts of their practitioners. Yet there are differences. Distinct from community literacy, community listening is rooted in (or elemental to) community settings rather than imported into them from rhetoric, literacy studies, or other academic disciplines. Community listening and literacy also differ in their orientation toward action. The latter, through rivaling, compels practitioners toward specifically democratic ends; thus, rivals pursue solutions to shared problems (e.g., disruptions, explanations) that are collective, ameliorative, and egalitarian. By contrast, community listening arcs toward acknowledgment, which is a social act that involves simultaneously asserting independence (i.e., self and other) while broaching both dependence and interdependence.

Listening is also a powerful force throughout the career contribution of Jacqueline Jones Royster. For her, listening is integrated into reading, writing, and speaking, and as such it is fundamental to the world-building and world-sustaining literacy traditions of the African American women writers whose rhetorics she amplifies across timespace, texts, and situations. Always fiercely invitational, Royster asks us, her reader-listeners, to join her in recognizing the profound importance of both listening and being listened to, which she juxtaposes against the harm of forced listening and being silenced. For example, scene one of "When the First Voice You Hear Is Not Your Own" opens with this recollection:

> I have been compelled on too many occasions to count to sit as a well-mannered Other, silently, in a state of tolerance that requires me to be as expressionless as I can manage, while colleagues who occupy a place of entitlement different from my own talk about the history and achievements of people from my ethnic group, or even about their perceptions of our struggles. I have been compelled to listen as they have comfortably claimed the authority to engage in the construction of knowledge and meaning about me and mine. (30)

Observing that "subject position is everything" (31), Royster goes on to demonstrate how listening is essential: first, to recognizing "cross-cultural misconduct" as such (32); and second, to redressing it by repositioning interlocutors (who are always also interauditors) in reciprocal relations. In the classroom, these ideas undergird a multisensory pedagogy of listening. Looking back on more than a decade of teaching at Spelman, Royster writes: "What unfolds for me from observing and listening is questioning and engaging in dialogue with students to see what their issues are and what problems there are. We then reflect together and figure out how best to act" ("Looking" 23). Almost fifteen years later, the same principles inform the listening stance she encourages everyone to take at

the 2014 Watson Conference. "Linking listening to ethical codes of rhetorical behavior" (287), Royster advocates speaking and listening in ways that demonstrate care and respect in the form of responsivity (i.e., talking or not talking back) and "its dialectical counterparts, responsibility and accountability" (288).

Constellating community listening with Royster's work raises a series of provocative questions, including several that Royster poses directly—*When do we listen? How do we listen? How do we demonstrate respect as listeners? How do we transform listening into action* ("First Voice" 38)—and many that can be found in the spaces made legible by her work. Importantly, though Royster offers numerous scholarly examples, her understanding of listening is not simply academic. In *Traces of a Stream*, she demonstrates how listening and storytelling are concomitant in African American women writers' literacy traditions, where they constitute a joint means of agency that extends from the power to imagine what is possible to the courage and strength to strive toward it. Like teaching and learning, listening is "a people-centered human enterprise" (5), both in her estimate and in ours. Thus, between the lines and wavelengths, Royster encourages us to examine how we name the various roles that practitioners of community listening play. Are they rivals in Flower's sense? Are they negotiators, people "who can cross boundaries and serve as guide and translator for Others," as Royster names herself ("First Voice" 34)? Or, when we examine the specific activities of radio DJs, muralists, community educators, and others (as contributors to this volume do), would we term them something else? Whatever the case, Royster encourages us to pay close attention to listening and to the interconnectedness of listening and telling stories.

Readers attuned to listening will already be aware of the numerous ways in which Royster's and Ratcliffe's work on listening aligns. Both "encourage speakers to listen rhetorically," in Royster's words, emphasizing not only "the need to be highly skilled in both listening and speaking" and "develop the habit of paying attention to context, stakeholders, and the stakes of an interaction" but also "to take into account the multiple discourses that are embedded in and surround our conversations" and "develop a sense of personal and professional accountability for reasonable action" ("Responsivity" 287-288). There are also important differences. While for Royster subject position is everything, for Ratcliffe it is cultural position, and she locates rhetorical listening firmly in modern American culture, a "then-that-is-now" where listeners continuously must reckon with white supremacy and related tropes (e.g., racism, whiteness) (*Rhetorical Listening* 107-120). Rooted in literary examples and the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition, rhetorical listening is itself a trope, specifically "a trope for interpretive invention" that involves four moves: "understanding of self and other" (27), operating within "a logic of accountability" that is cognizant of the past while

prioritizing the present (and future) (31-32), identifying (in a Burkean sense) with both commonalities and differences (32-33), and analyzing both argumentative claims made in any situation and their cultural logics (33).

A powerful means of sense-making, rhetorical listening emerges from Ratcliffe's oeuvre as an omnibus method, a rhetorical device ready for application in response to any text or situation. As a "code of cross-cultural conduct," rhetorical listening is also Ratcliffe's powerful and personal response to the gauntlet Royster threw down at the inaugural Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference in 1997. As Ratcliffe recalls, Royster "challenged attendees to construct . . . rhetorical tactics for fostering cross-cultural communication," including mechanisms for the kind of "gender/race work" that rhetorical listening is designed to enable (3-4). Specifically, rhetorical listening gives rhetors ways of doing more than just listening and really trying to hear what others have to say (e.g., paying close attention, responding empathetically). Rhetorical listening is a means of "listening in" and responding productively, especially when one is not directly addressed, whether the context is public discourse, an unfamiliar text, or a conversation overheard. The latter, rhetorical eavesdropping, is an important example, not least because idiomatically it raises specters of actual and discursive violence (e.g., trespassing, invasion of privacy, romanticizing marginalization). Ratcliffe addresses these concerns directly, and in doing so, she distinguishes the context in which rhetorical listeners, including eavesdroppers, operate. While "the common definition" of eavesdropping may consign "listening in" to problematic situations, Ratcliffe assures: "Within my reworked definition, this claim is groundless" because "rhetorical eavesdropping entails positioning oneself to overhear both oneself and others, listening to learn, and, most importantly, being *careful* (i.e., full of care) not to overstep another's boundaries or interrupt the agency of another's discourse" (106, original emphasis). This idea strongly carries over into the enumerated tactics that Ratcliffe and Jensen offer in *Rhetorical Listening in Action*, where they present (1) building cultural logics, (2) eavesdropping, (3) listening metonymically, and (4) listening pedagogically as samples or models that "listening writers who possess the capacity to develop their own tactics" might evolve (33-34).

When we constellate community listening and rhetorical listening, we see the various ways they correspond, overlap, and diverge. Practitioners of both are motivated by their interest in others, and that relational pull generates momentum for action inflected by curiosity, concern, and a sense of responsibility or care, broadly understood. Both community listeners and their rhetorical counterparts grapple with the limits and possibilities of agency, however it may be construed, and both are sensitive to hauntings, the absent presence of the past in the present, which calls for and calls forward historical knowledge. Notably, Ratcliffe

formulates rhetorical listening in terms of tactics. In fact, in *Rhetorical Listening*, she deliberately rewrites de Certeau when she vests the tactics of rhetorical listening (e.g., listening metonymically, eavesdropping, listening pedagogically) with discursive power (16, 189n15). This is a bold move of critical performativity: first, because it mainstreams rhetorical means (i.e., tactics) that are usually considered the critical provenance of the margins; second, because it accepts the great risk of cooptation that comes with mainstreaming, buoyed by what readers might recognize as the signature, stubborn hope of rhetorical feminism (Glenn 341). By contrast, in this volume and elsewhere, we tell stories to represent community listening *in situ*, as praxes embedded in the everyday knowledge of specific communities. As such, community listening is akin to walking, talking, and storytelling: it is local repertoires of prosaic acts whose efficacy is not keyed to general standards or external measures so much as it helps make and is made by the confluence of circumstances that occasion it, host it, and receive it.

Like all forms of knowing-through-doing, community listening may be best revealed through a combination of lived activity and recorded stories. The latter encourage a range of affective and intellectual responses that complement the phenomenology and range of experiential learning that action and participation enable. We see similarities in the stories about listening told by Flower, Royster, and Ratcliffe. We also observe a shared commitment to responsivity across the examples we singled out of the starry sky, which represents the scholarly horizon of possibility for this volume. Royster discusses this concept in her role as moderator of the 2014 Thomas R. Watson Conference. Organized by Mary P. Sheridan, a contributor to this volume, the conference centered on responsivity as a framework for forward-thinking attuned to "desired and emerging trends in the ways we research and teach, partner, and mentor" (12). In Royster's words, responsivity "functions critically as part and parcel of a values construct, shaped, informed, and exercised amid the complex interactions and relationships of our sense-making assets" ("Responsivity" 283). Responsivity also names the impulse to avoid "lockstep, paint-by-numbers" applications of listening (Ratcliffe 189n15), as if listeners could simply skill and drill. Instead, the collective aim of all of us working to define and describe listening praxes is most basic: to ensure they are discernible, distinguishable from one another, and available for ongoing consideration and use.

INTERVENTIONS IN RHETORICAL INTERACTIVITY THROUGH COMMUNITY LISTENING

For the good rhetor committed to listening as well as speaking, writing, and reading well, invention is not the romantic poet's fantasy of ingenious solo

origination, nor is intervention the stuff of swashbuckling hero narratives. Instead, the latter entails dwelling within and working efficaciously with commonplaces. Certainly, this is the spirit in which the contributors to this volume offer insight into community listening as it is enacted across diverse contexts. If we were to map the sites of community listening represented in the chapters below, we might start with pinpoints across the continental U.S., including the Pacific Northwest, the South, and the Western states, as well as the Borderland. Next, we might map some of the currents of media circulation that occasion community listening: public art, hashtag activism, radio broadcasts, and letters sent from incarcerated writers to both public and private recipients.

Through stories about community listening set in these analog and digital locations, the contributors to this volume showcase some of the many ways community listening enables practitioners to make space, to come between established ideas, expectations, and relations—sometimes for just a flash, a moment of insight; sometimes for an interval long enough to make change, whether to policy, a legacy, or someone's mind. In earlier pages, we differentiated community listening from various established theories and emergent methodologies. Now, we look at the contributions of the individual chapters to get an understanding of when and how the authors see community listening at play and what they believe community listening is doing to intervene in the ways we understand rhetorical interactivity. We consider how the chapters function as interventions when their authors probe the social, rhetorical, and political relations they work through in the act of defining community listening. While we, as editors, can identify various interventions in how we understand listening inter- and intra-actions emerging in the contexts described within the chapters of this book, we expect that readers will recognize many other connections and disruptions.

Here we note that authors often coin an original version of community listening that suits their project or names their vision, such as community-centered listening, civic community listening, proximate listening, storied community listening, and daunting community listening. In articulating their own terms, each chapter advances our understanding of what community listening can mean and achieve. We see these acts of customizing the term as opening possibilities for community listening when it is put into practice rather than codifying it. Every author or author group extends community listening in ways that give the concept greater complexity as a means of identifying and understanding community practices, critiques, disruptions, and means of creating knowledge. Beyond customizing terms that extend our understanding of community listening, we also acknowledge that the chapters challenge readers to pay attention differently to the ways we think of listening inter- and intra-actions. We observe authors disrupting existing practices, changing their actions when they are community

listeners themselves, handling ethical conflicts, taking responsibility, and assuming new positions in response to what they discover through community listening. Listening occurs in retrospect and as an entanglement with other concepts.

In the chapters that follow, readers will recognize various other disruptions expanding their understanding of community listening and begin to consider the possibilities they offer for change in the ways community members (academic and nonacademic) relate to one another guided by community knowledge. The work included in this volume challenges what we can know by listening to and in carceral spaces as well as archives. It offers listening as more than one kind of ethical stance, and it shows how listening stances can open listeners to new kinds of understanding, whether online or on-site. Taken together, the chapters push readers to consider what it means to listen to, through, and with, communities and how we can learn from community ways of knowing to act differently.

Part 1. Hauntings and Possibilities

In the opening chapter, "Getting Closer to Mass Incarceration: Proximate Listening as Community Activism," Sally F. Benson, coins *proximate listening*, a form of community listening that depends on relationality and responsibility. Proximate listening refers broadly to the many listening moments that occur within the prison complex; specifically, it is about the author learning to listen and understand from the community as Benson explains: "I identify *proximate listening* as an active means of listening toward members of our communities from a stance of both nearness and radical uncertainty." Through Benson's compelling narrative of her ongoing experience as a prison educator in New Mexico, we watch her find her way as a proximate listener who is always in a state of moving toward; that is, she remains hopeful even when her incarcerated students' situations seem dire. Though the chapter is about Benson's work as a prison educator in a maximum-security men's prison, and the community she writes about is the prison itself (a kind of non-community according to Benson's descriptions of individual cells and the isolation in which the men exist), the primary listener in this piece is herself, the non-incarcerated teacher-author-woman. "Proximity engages ways of listening beyond what we tell ourselves we hear. Leaning toward understanding, but not assuming understanding, allows listeners to remain open to new, plural, or unattainable meanings." Benson shows us how she works to listen more deeply, to understand the educational and personal needs expressed by her study as a way of also understanding the prison system, the injustices of and attempted reforms to that institution, and for her as an educator to have some degree of impact. By coming near to this incarcerated population as a community listener, Benson is transformed: "Listening toward others without

appropriating meaning has invoked me to change, to position myself to advocate, or to move closer to do more proximate listening."

Hauntings and possibilities for change through activism and identifying differently are threaded through Chapter 2, Ada Hubrig's "Crafting Crip Space Through Disabled Political Advocacy: #CripTheVote as Community Listening." Unlike some authors who build upon community listening by contributing an original way of using the term, Hubrig is interested in the entanglement of concepts, that is, how disability advocacy is shaped by community listening, as well as how listening practices can be better defined and enacted through disability perspectives. Focusing on the social media hashtag #CripTheVote, Hubrig looks at the activist site *as* community listening, explaining that "#CripTheVote employs community listening practices—carefully attending to issues by directly and deliberately engaging those most impacted—to build community, counter ableism and oppression, and exercise political agency." In this way, "#CripTheVote lets us see community listening when it is used and modified for purposes defined by a virtual activist community." Hubrig's argument that sites of disability activism like #CripTheVote create spaces for new ways of listening across disabilities, across bodies, and across differences can help us better understand that community listening can be directed toward "challenging the ableism and other forms of oppression that dismiss the forms of engagement used by disabled and otherwise marginalized rhetors." In this sense, community listening becomes a vehicle for the changes we might hope to see enacted within communities of practice and, more broadly, as sites interacting in the world.

For Patty Wilde, Mitzi Ceballos, and Wyn Andrews Richards, authors of Chapter 3, "Keeping Bad Company: Listening to Aryan Nations in the Archives," the decision to take on the Aryan Nations texts collected in Washington State University's archives and library shelves marked an intervention in and of itself. Intended initially as a class project on archival research, studying their university's collection of local Aryan Nations publications disturbed them as readers and researchers to the point that they were propelled into becoming active community listeners. Haunted by both the periodicals and their presence as a collection shelved within and sanctioned by their university's library, the authors had to listen to absorb and believe the actions that had been taken by their university community when it acquired manuscripts from the Aryan Nations and archived them. The form of listening the authors undertook was a complex openness to the difficult, troubling actions taken by the library's archivists as a vehicle for paying attention to their own listening when they encountered texts they found offensive. Similar to other author groups in this volume who attempted to reconcile university positions they found objectionable, Wilde, Ceballos, and Richards interrogated their own positions and practices of listening within the

university community as they confronted the documents in the archives, and as they tried to come to terms with the librarians' choices in regard to the Aryan Nations' texts. Community listening for Wilde, Ceballos, and Richards is about handling an ethical conflict. They write, "Though the Aryan Nations documents are abhorrent and detestable, we must listen to these sources to confront the racist legacy that continues to haunt the Pacific Northwest and avoid the kind of white supremacy propagation that occurs when such ugly voices are routinely ignored" (13-14). For them, community listening means taking responsibility in situations in which they believe others have been irresponsible. "The story that we tell, then," they explain, "is also about our attempt to use community listening to encourage the archivists to further contextualize this collection and, more broadly, adopt antiracist archival practices."

Part 2. Stories of Sustaining Community

In Chapter 4, Kyle Boggs brings public art into the discussion of community listening, arguing that art can be a vehicle for change when it makes a deliberate intervention into the ways communities are portrayed and how they portray themselves. "The Public Art of Listening: Relational Accountability and The Painted Desert Project" takes readers on a tour of mural artist Chip Thomas' large paintings that are displayed on sides of highways and in towns in the Navajo nation of Arizona, bridging the visual, auditory, and sociopolitical. For Boggs, looking becomes a form of listening: "Public art has also been established as a valid form of community writing, but it also constitutes a particular kind of community listening that is expressed uniquely through the medium of art that reflects community values, goals, and lived experiences, histories, identities, and needs." Boggs makes a case for the importance of listening to art, especially when the goal of the work is to showcase community experiences: "If community listening is to be understood through relationality, which I argue it should, then it precedes not just reading, writing, and speaking, but all forms of community engagement, including art." Chip Thomas, the artist Boggs studies, is also a community listener, someone who inhabits a listening role so that he may take in the perspectives of community members before creating his work. Boggs interprets Thomas' art as an intervention because of the way it interrupts the landscape, injecting human images on billboard-sized displays and demanding that viewers pay attention. The attention paid by the artist, and the call for viewers to attend to the work comprise listening acts, as Boggs has us understand them: "When it is rooted in building trust, reflecting a relational process that establishes structures of accountability, community listening becomes a mode of perceiving, reflecting, and responding that is personal and situational."

In Chapter 5, Karen R. Tellez-Trujillo considers community listening from a different angle as she explores nostalgia and memories of home in "The DJ as Relational Listener and Creator of an Ethos of Community Listening." In Tellez-Trujillo's work, which focuses on a Sunday afternoon oldies program in a mostly Latinx southwest U.S. location, listening to the radio is treated literally as an activity that binds and sustains. The author explains: "For me, community listening means coming together to honor people, places, and memories through music. I think I have been listening in this way my whole life. I have listened with the purpose of connecting with fellow listeners through their stories and recollections surrounding the music that is the soundtrack of their lives while simultaneously creating my own soundtrack." Family members relate to one another as they dance at home; faraway travelers listen remotely to connect with memories of community; the DJ relates when he engages callers and when he responds to their music requests as a means of creating new memories. Listening to music is an action that moves through the body, Tellez-Trujillo writes, "As I listen, I access people that are out of reach, listening through my body, moving my body, and being emotionally moved as acts of remembrance of my past, my family, and my culture." Tellez-Trujillo characterizes a loyal community of listeners across three generations, as they participate in a practice she calls *relational listening* that is oriented around the idea of multiple forms of relationship. Relational listening is not only about relationships with family and the practices of a close-knit community; it is also a means of looking at situations relative to one another and acting in response. Much of the chapter focuses on "Mike, el DJ," who enacts and models the listening stance that Tellez-Trujillo attributes to The Fox Jukebox, a Sunday radio show, noting through one story after another how a local way of being is created through music and family. Mike carries the responsibility of keeping it all happening. Tellez-Trujillo's treatment of the radio show leaves readers with a sense of possibility: There is something about the way that Mike creates the show through relational listening that has a hold on listeners, keeping them tuned in week after week, year after year. This is the possibility for continued identification through moves and songs as a way to keep on listening. This is what keeps the community functioning.

Through their study of prison letter writing programs, "Listening In: Letter Writing and Rhetorical Resistance Behind Bars," Alexandra J. Cavallaro, Wendy Hinshaw, and Tobi Jacobi identify a unique form of community listening in Chapter 6 that they call *community-centered listening*. The authors explain, "We carve out a specific space for what we are calling community-centered listening to letter-writers behind bars to recognize the ways in which writers form community–however fragmented or partial–and enact practices of rhetorical and material resilience through listening." Differentiating this term from the more

general community listening, they argue that "community-centered listening helps us navigate our relationship to the incarcerated writers we read and the writing we help to amplify, as well as the limits of what we can know through this writing." The term serves various functions. On the one hand, it names actions performed by incarcerated writers to connect out and within the space of the prison, demonstrating the kind of inter- and intra-activity that we witness in many of the chapters as authors peer in at community ways of being and out to acknowledge the impact of those ways of being in the world. The acts of communicating and writing press up against the boundaries of the prison. On the other hand, we see Cavallaro, Hinshaw, and Jacobi applying the term to themselves as community-engaged scholars who have been involved in prison writing projects and who are also researchers studying archives of letters and published letters. Community-centered listening thus serves as an umbrella for many actions, connecting them into a network of community-centeredness. The authors observe that they are "identifying listening relationships" as they study the letters individually in their research and together as a group of authors working through these interconnections in composing their chapter. In addition to making an argument for the multiplicity of listening relationships, they are also concerned with the disruption such connections can make in carceral spaces as they challenge a colonizing culture of punishment.

Part 3. Negotiating Self and Community

The intersections between self, community, and listening are apparent in this volume too. Communication scholars Bailey M. Oliver-Blackburn, April Chatham-Carpenter, and Carol L. Thompson employ community listening as a means of negotiating self and community. In Chapter 7, "Civic Community Listening: The Nexus of Storytelling and Listening Within Civic Communities," the researcher-authors study the storytelling and listening practices cultivated by members of a nonprofit community organization whose goal is to talk across differences: "The key in these contexts is for the participants to learn to engage in 'civic community listening,' which we define as listening that operates in a civic context in which individuals openly share their diverse perspectives and listen to others with the goal of understanding, as they work across their political differences." By observing and analyzing the listening interactions among community members in the Braver Angels organization, they examine the concept of *civic community listening* as it is put into practice to speculate about the possibility of bringing this approach to other civic contexts. It also provides them with a means of evaluating community listening by applying the concept as methodology and method: "Indeed, when members of a group share stories and employ

listening practices to actively engage together with and across their differences in the context of a community, they are participating in community listening. Put simply, storytelling and listening become an entrée or an invitation for others to enter into community with each other." Oliver-Blackburn, Chapham-Carpenter, and Thompson center the role of storytelling in civic community listening by demonstrating through examples of interactions between Braver Angels members how storytelling is the medium that encourages talking and listening across perspectives and viewpoints: "We found that civic community listening, as observed in the settings of this community, occurred in specific moments in workshops, but also happened where there were multiple sequences of exchanges between individuals in a group, with time allotted for both parties to be listening and telling stories."

Community listening as methodology is developed further in Chapter 8 by Cate Fosl, Kelly Kinahan, Carrie Mott, Mary P. Sheridan, Angela Storey, and Shelley Thomas in "Community Listening in, with, and against Whiteness at a PWI." This cross-disciplinary group of colleagues reflect on their experiences as facilitators of antiracist reading circles sponsored by the University of Louisville's Anne Braden Institute. Their reflections are informed by their attention to positionality, including their status as white women scholars at a PWI, and their desire for accountability, as they contemplate how their university has addressed, and simultaneously failed to address, structural racism. In their quest to confront and contemplate their own whiteness as well as the racism within their city and campus, the authors incorporate community listening as the framework guiding this work. Mary P. Sheridan explains: "To me, community listening is a practice of defamiliarization meant to expose majoritarian biases (including our own) and to foreground community knowledge." Community listening is engaged as a means of critiquing, analyzing, and restorying community stories and knowledge. It aids the reading circle facilitator-authors in challenging notions of community that have circulated historically and culturally; it also provides them with a central concept for evaluating the reading circles. For the facilitators, the online reading circles become sites for learning to practice community listening. Shelley Thomas reflects that the facilitators "learned substantive counterstories that challenged the cultural logics I had learned."

Similarly, in Chapter 9, "On Being in It," Katie W. Powell brings together community stories and personal experience through the process of studying a historic event in her community in Fayetteville, Arkansas, as it has been renegotiated in the present. *Storied community listening*, a term Powell invents, is best understood in retrospect as she looks back at the ways that story was used to re-narrate a racist historical event and its effects. She explains, "Critical to our group's mission and directly in line with the goal and intention of storied

community listening is prioritizing and unearthing the ways of knowing and pieces of the story that have not been prioritized or centered. In this spirit of storied community listening, the group heard the need to bring to light these competing narratives." Thus, storied community listening becomes a method for employing counterstory. Powell witnesses and participates as the community chooses to alter, and thereby correct, its own stories. Reflecting on the dynamics that occurred as community members learned to listen to one another's responses to a troubled, raced history taught Powell a unique way of understanding what can happen when one listens and then listens again. By learning to trust the process of storied community listening, Powell finds a way of entering and contributing to a conversation on racial reconciliation.

In the final chapter by Keri Epps and Rowie Kirby-Straker with Casey Beiswenger, Zoe Chamberlin, Hannah Hill, Lauren Robertson, and Kaitlyn Taylor, we witness community listening employed as a method for critical analysis and action. The authors, along with a group of their undergraduate students, engaged with a community organization, Authoring Action (A2). "The A2 pedagogy," they explain, "is grounded in deep listening." Epps and Kirby-Straker's engagement with A2 reminds us that community listening has been happening in non-academic and academic settings all along, prior to our study of it in this collection and other scholarly work. A2 offered Epps and Kirby-Straker and their students an important model that their partner termed *daunting community listening*. This spin on community listening acknowledges the discomfort and difficulty that may be associated with a deep listening engagement. The authors refer to the listening stance they learn to take as a "full-body listening practice." Initially, Epps and Kirby-Straker learned the process by training with the organization; they then applied it in an extracurricular Community Listening Accountability Group (CLAG) created with their students. It is through the activities of the pilot group that readers begin to see the challenges of applying daunting community listening as an intentional and ongoing process. Student participants reflect on their listening process as part of their training to work for A2. Through this "redefinition" practice, they learned to listen and connect in new ways that can continue to inform academic and community-based interactions.

In sum, the interventions that emerge throughout the chapters rise out of juxtapositions, interrelations, inter- and intra-actions, and even collisions. We see this, for example, when Wilde, Ceballos, and Richards struggle to reconcile their university library's acceptance of Aryan Nations texts on the shelves and in the archives, and in the chapter on the Braver Angels in which the researchers-authors seek to understand the efforts of a bipartisan community group to reach across political affiliations for better understanding. In these cases, community listening is taken up as a means of making sense from a collision of ideas and ways

of being. That entangling action is something readers can witness occurring via the community listening practices explored in every chapter. Part of the intervention exhibited through each piece comes through the author's/s' contemplation of ways of knowing individually and collectively, past and present, and how those ways weave together and change through the listening practices explored in the individual chapters as well as the authors' representation of what listening means and how it can be used and understood, now and in the future.

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