

# **Toward a Sound Ecology**

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## **Paper Abstract**

I propose to take sounds rather than texts or objects as the paradigm case of experiencing and understanding the world, and to see how a sonic ontology leads to a relational epistemology and to communal activity which stands in contrast to instrumental consciousness and economic rationality. Instead of the thinking subject separated from the humanistic text, or from the scientific object, I offer the intersubjective connection made through sound. A sound ecology is based in a sonic ontology. Sound announces presence. Two beings present to each other in sound, connected through mutual sonic vibration, constitute a co-presence that is a basis for a sound community. In its connection, a sound community is well integrated, where social and cultural exchanges are more likely to be cooperative than competitive, and where economic exchanges are more likely to arise from and maintain personal relationships rather than those that are impersonal, and contractual. In that way, a sound community displays a sound economy. A sound behavioral ecology, characteristic of a sonic ontology and a sound community, stands on mutuality, co-evolution, and group selection, rather than on selfishness, cost-benefit analyses, and fitness.