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The Oral Aural Walter Ong

Abigail Lambke
Saint Louis University

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The Oral Aural Walter Ong

Abigail Lambke

When I was introduced to the Walter J. Ong, S.J. Archival Collection at Saint Louis University in 2008, I was a first-year doctoral student who knew little of Ong's scholarship. In the year I spent working in the collection, I became familiar with the stages of his scholarship and the turns of his life. But while I looked through all of his papers, read his correspondence, and glanced at his childhood photos, it was not until I listened to his recorded voice that I came to understand Ong as a cohesive human being. Listening allowed me to hear his humor, his warmth, and his humanity in a way that was not present on a printed page. This audio essay presents excerpts from two of Ong's recorded lectures, offering a perspective into Ong, his scholarship, and the affordances of digital sound that can only be heard through listening.

[The Oral Aural Walter Ong](#)

To view a written transcript, click [here](#).

Abigail Lambke is a doctoral candidate in English at Saint Louis University studying digital sound and rhetoric. She has been entranced by the red record button since her first tape player, which wouldn't let you hit "record" without also hitting "play." You can find her on Twitter [@abileigh](#), tweeting about sound, rhetoric, and moments of play.

References

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Image

Ong, Walter. Poster from "The End of the Age of Literacy" at Fordham University. 6 April 1967. Walter J. Ong Manuscript Collection (DOC MSS 641.2.1.1.155), Saint Louis University Libraries Special Collection, St. Louis University.

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