

Proposal: Track II: Strategic Communication

**Semiotic meaning and communication in sound: an alternative perspective**

Dr. Beate Flath

Department of Musicology, Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Austria

beate.flath@uni-graz.at

Technical equipment: data projector

Sound as (strategic) communication-tool is no invention of marketing – its functional basis could be seen in the immediate communication of emotional expression in sound. This paper discusses the relation of sound and semiotic meaning of sound in strategic communication processes with respect to the possibilities and constraints of semiotic meaning of sound and with respect to different functions of sound and its semiotic meaning in multimodal contexts.

Possibilities and constraints of semiotic meaning of sound are discussed on the basis of communicative qualities of sound itself. Referring to anthropological theories and empirical evidence on the connection of sound and its associations it would be argued that the range of semiotic meaning is at least determined by sound and its characteristics.

Therefore semiotic meaning of sound could be differentiated with respect to functions of sound in multimodal contexts (e.g. jingles, physical/emotional underscoring): it may range from cultural learned meanings to anthropological based signals.

This paper questions the dominance of semiotic meaning within the discussion about (strategic) communication in sound and suggests putting an alternative approach aside it.