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Abstract: Soundscapes and (dis)able bodies

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One of the characteristics of modern society is considered to be an increasing amount of sounds and noise, both in volume and scope. While various locations involve different types of sounds, not everyone has equal access to these soundscapes. Additionally, sounds are not neutral but include cultural beliefs and norms. How are sounds, or lack of sounds, experienced by persons whose access to sounds is not obvious, that is people with hearing loss? Which groups of people are excluded from the soundscapes of modern society?

The empirical material of the study is people with cochlear implants, who are D/deaf but by the use of medical technology have hearing. What are their experiences of different types of soundscapes, especially of soundscapes associated to leisure activities? What strategies do they use when they are in difficult sound environments? The starting point of this study is that disabilities, such as in hearing loss, not only have medical implications but also social and cultural consequences. Disability/ability is a way of thinking about the body that is based on historical and cultural circumstances, always in close relation to the significance of space and place. By following individuals with different access to sound and noise, the hidden premises of the modern soundscapes are made visible.