

**PRESSURES
OF THE UNSPEAKABLE**

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GREGORY WHITEHEAD

TELEPHONE
CALLER:

Oh, I've just been listening to you and I'd really like to be able to scream but when I want to scream all I seem to do is breathe in... so as you said on the program there's a silent scream. Perhaps I'm screaming inside and I can't give voice to it. But I think it's a really interesting concept what you're doing and I'm looking forward to hearing all the results of it.

SOUNDS OF FOOTBALL MATCH, SCREAMS, LIONS ROARING.

DR. WHITEHEAD:

The scream, the screamThe scream is often treated as some kind of insurmountable, impenetrable obstacle - pure, white noise, force that is beyond analysis and unworthy of any kind of interpretation but here at the Institute we hear the scream from entirely the other perspective: the scream as an opening, as an entry point, as an axis point, an entry into a vast interior landscape that has as its surface this highly nuanced, very individual psycho-acoustic force to it.

There is also a scream line, the actual journey that the screamer takes into the interior landscape and when we established the telephone answering machine at the Institute, we called it the Scream Line because that machine was going to circulate individual scream lines into

TELEPHONE
CALLERS:

Thank you, Mr. Whitehead. I believe you are on the wrong track. I'm sure if you came to my house you would hear the screams that you'd never want to hear again.

There's nothing like a good scream to get your aggressions out and I am particularly one of those people who needs to ventilate quite regularly so here I go Oh, I feel much better now thank you.

There's another screamer on the line just a minute.

Screaming, screaming.

Especially nowadays when we've got so many pressures... ..

Hi, I'm Amelia Mangon. I'm eight years old and here's my scream goodbye.

Hello, Mr. Whitehead, it's approximately 4pm Saturday afternoon, October 19th. No two people cry the same way. I wonder whether this could apply to screams as well. You should know by now. I may do some research on that. Meanwhile, to add to your screamscape....

Screaming is a part of my dreaming. It happens only at night.....

Can I do it again....

This is what I think of your stupid, wanky scream idea. Come on. Kill a whale, man. Kill a whale, man. They're killing me. They're right inside of me. Left, right.

COLLAGE OF ABUSE AND SCREAMS .

MUSIC

DR. WHITEHEAD: The scream. The scream. We have screams that go from the most extreme 'no'. to the most ecstatic 'yes' the 'yes' and the 'no' then doubles itself, or echoes itself in a whole range of other opposites. The tension between male and female, between head and belly the belly scream and the more head scream the death rattle, which is of course a 'no' scream, an extreme 'no' scream and the birth scream which is a 'yes' scream which is not just an opening of the screamer but an opening into the world for a new human, who then begins life by screaming. The scream to and the scream against. There's the inside scream... the silent scream the silent white noise.... that becomes the invisible pressure and.... the real scream and the fake scream... the fake scream being a product of a media culture which uses screams in a particular kind of way screams which then become imported into individuals and reproduced as their screams, when in fact .
(Phone rings) excuse me.

RADIO INTERVIEWER:

Just bear with me while I phone a new extension line here in the ABC ... a new service that's provided at the moment 1312 ... 1312 that's the extension going through ... you know what they're like, these ABC phones, they're absolutely appalling, I'm getting the control room through here on the intercom. Dave, could you turn the intercom off That's it... just bear with us. OK, well, we won't have the phone going into the Scream Room just yet but anyway, I can tell you it is a new service here at the ABC. Your eight cents a day gives you a chance of not only screaming down the telephone and people are actually doing it as you can hear.

TELEPHONE
CALLER:

Hello, my name is Kevin O'Connor. I live in Goulburn.
Here is my special end-of-a-hard-day in Year 6 scream... ..
Thank you.

RADIO
INTERVIEWER:

Is that all? OK, They're very varied, infinitely varied,
screams. Aren't they? (Absolutely) They seem to take on a
life of their own. You start off screaming at one point and
you'll end up at another.

DR. WHITEHEAD:

Yeah, and at the Institute we're fond of saying that everyone
screams but everyone screams alone.

RADIO
INTERVIEWER:

Oh, that's, yes. I wish I'd had that in my introduction.
That's a wonderful line.....sounds a bit like an S and M.

DR. WHITEHEAD:

Yes, I know. Well,. Screams happen at this borderline of
pleasure and pain and we do encourage people to invite their
friends or ... into the Scream Room ... or set up whatever
situation they want which will help them to access their
innermost scream.

RADIO
INTERVIEWER:

Are these screams confidential ... you're not going to?

DR. WHITEHEAD:

Absolutely. Well, there's absolutely no way since it's strictly a
radio project ... there's no way to match screams with bodies.
Once we have the screams only the screams remain.

RADIO
INTERVIEWER:

Yeah, and what are you going to do with them?

It's wonderful for you. Should do this each day after the
program.... yes, I'm all puffed out now. I'll let you go.

MUSIC

TELEPHONE
CALLER:

Hello, Gregory. In the broadcast this morning, October 17th,
the interviewer remarked that some of your samples
sounded like an SM scene. Having some experience in that
area, I'd like to leave some ideas and examples of screams
from, as you said, the border of pain and pleasure. Some
submissives ... or masochists, if you prefer, like to take as
much corporal punishment as possible in silence. But to
many of us we enjoy it more if we allow ourselves to vocalise
and not hold back. Screams, and related yells, cries and
gasps are enjoyable, liberating, even cathartic to the one
lucky enough to suffer. The examples I am going to play for
you are not faked or exaggerated. They're my voice dubbed
from a private video made with a talented and keen dominant
lady. The first group are in order of ascending strength, so
the first few raise the question, when is a sound no longer a
groan but becomes a scream.

EXTRACT FROM VIDEO

That last one indeed had an element of surprise in the voice, as the mistress said by virtue of the stroke landing on an unexpected part of the body. The question you might want to address is whether a scream is still a scream when a word is shouted at the same time. This question arises from the tradition in bondage and discipline of making the submissive partner count the strokes, like so

EXTRACT FROM VIDEO

And finally some from the gasp, or gasp category.....

EXTRACT FROM VIDEO:

And a good time was had by all.

DR. WHITEHEAD: The scream, the scream ... give in to the more chaotic nature.

COLLAGE OF BREATHS, HAP KEE DO WORK

HAP KEE DO
INSTRUCTOR:

The voice in general is used to focus the power. You force the air up and out and scream, and the yells used to be a psychological weapon both for you and against your opponent. Obviously, if someone's screaming at you it's quite off-putting. A loud, a deep, guttural yell is going to put you off and produce confidence in the person using it.

They can create this power with their yell that is supposed to be able to affect someone without having touched them. They've felt as though the yell has actually impacted on them when it hasn't, it's just their perception.

SOUNDS OF HAP KEE DO WORK:

DR. WHITEHEAD: In many ways scream analysis is more of an art than a science. It's an interpretative process and one of the things that we're doing here at the Institute is developing a series of techniques which help us to let the scream literally inhabit our bodies, flowing through our own bodies into our voice and to actually give voice to the body of the original scream. We have developed a very rough classification system for screams which break down into the basic elements of earth, water, fire, air. The basic forces of male/female and primal and finally the destiny of the scream which we understand as birth, death or bardo; bardo being a Tibetan concept which designates the state of suspension between the living and dead. The first example falls into the, let's see to the category ... earth, fire, female and it goes something like this.....

OK, the second I'll just pick these out ... I've got a catalogue which is in this book and it's also in my body. The second one it's quite different than the first it falls into the categories of air/male/primal/bardo. It's an air/male/primal/bardo scream....

The, sorry, excuse me, just ... The final example is maybe the most difficult in my particular scream memory catalogue, not just because I'm a male but because of its particular intensity... its very specific intensity. It's the fire/water/female/birth scream and this is about as close as I've been able to get....

TELEPHONE CALLERS:

Hello, I'm calling the Scream Line to say thank you for the opportunity to think about screaming. As I listened to you on Monday night I thought that's not me I don't scream. And yet after a day's reflection I think, well, is it?

Being given the freedom to scream has the possibility of releasing a lot of untouched darkened areas of our soul.

Anyway, as an adult I certainly only remember screaming twice and that's both the moments of my two children's birth. These screams were not pre-meditated, both times they completely took me by surprise and just kind of ripped out of me at the point of their bodies coming through my body.

I think screaming is used in a particular way with sharing pain. I've seen during childbirth women together screaming as loudly if not more loudly than the woman who is giving birth.

But for the person whose doing it for the first time you don't realise that you're about to scream. I had some wonderful births me alone with the power of my breath they involved me thinking about - as much as you can think in labour - because it's a process which grips your body with such intense periods of pain and then such wonderful respites that you go into a kind of non-rational, deeply explorative journey of yourself meeting this powerful, natural force. My meditations while I was in childbirth tended to link me with my own mother who'd had children, who'd had me, with women around the world who were having babies at that time, or who'd had babies through time. I realised that that experience cuts across social barriers, it cuts across all of history as an experience shared by women and it seemed a very incredible rite of passage as it was happening. As the birth neared its completion and the baby's head came out the time for me seemed to go into slow motion.

I had felt previously like a kind of peasant lying in a ditch just sort of enjoying this wonderful sensation of my body just naturally doing what it needed to do to make this birth occur suddenly the feeling that I was about to explode with anticipation and when the child came through my whole vagina seemed to just scream out with ... some people call it orgasmic pleasure ... I think it's much more than a sexual act it's this whole anticipation, it's this whole rite of passage as you realise some new life is entering history.

MUSIC, WITH COLLAGE OF SCREAMS

TELEPHONE
CALLER:

Hello.... hello, that's for all the suffering I've been through in the last four months. ✓

SOUNDS OF HAP KEE DO

DR. WHITEHEAD: The scream, the scream. One of the things that we do here at the Institute is re-unite human screams with the animal ... other. ... just to give an example of how the totemic classification system works, I've pulled out three different kinds of examples from the archive. The first example I think gives an immediate and obvious....

PLAYS TAPE

The second, though, is a little bit less obvious and again, it's not a literal acoustic match that we're after. It's more the feel of the scream, the emotional quality of the scream... the shape, if you will, the psycho-acoustic shape of the scream.

PLAYS TAPE

OK. Finally, the third example is one where sometimes I can't tell precisely which is the human screamer and

PLAYS TAPE

TELEPHONE
CALLER:

Hi, it's kind of early in the morning to scream, so I don't think I'll scream but I'm going to tell you a story. I was thinking about how screams sometimes come later ... much later like a kind of delayed reaction. So this is a true story that happened long ago when I was a teenager. And I was on this train. Like I'd run away I think with this guy and we were on this train and we'd been going for days and nights and it had got really steamy in this train, it was a kind of seedy 7

atmosphere, like everybody was playing cards, all the time playing cards and smoking and then suddenly this fight broke out like out of nowhere ... it was kind of ... first it was just these sounds... it was like really muffled sounds of bodies kind of colliding and ricocheting down the corridors and stuff, and then these kind of muffled shouts and we pulled the door across our compartment and this body kind of rolled over, rolled past, stumbled past and there was blood just smeared all over the glass and you couldn't see anything because of that. It was like the sounds and the vision and everything was muffled. But it took like hours and hours before we reached the next town, it was going through this small desert, but when we eventually got there the train stopped and there was this scene kind of took place .. like, absolute silence ... it was extraordinary - nothing, no- one seemed to speak and it was incredibly hot and hazy and there was just this desert all around and they took the body off the train and then the guy who'd killed him was taken off with handcuffs and these kind of few cops appeared from nowhere and it was just like this platform in the middle of nowhere. And then, suddenly, like out of the silence this scream came. It was just like something between a wail and a scream and it's like it just went right through the whole, kind of landscape and its like the dust sort of settled in the air as the scream kind of just hung there, it just seemed like for ages and I don't know if I can do that scream I can hear it really, really clearly. I'll try but I think it won't be like that. Anyway, it was something like this

Oh, hello, Gregory. I'd just like to contribute my thoughts on silent screaming. I've been using silent screaming for a long time now as a way of relaxing, and unblocking. I like to get somewhere sort of private where I'm not going to alarm the neighbours and stick my face in a pillow and go.

I reckon that people scream because when they're angry or scared they've built up a lot of pressure and then they scream to let it all out.

Hello. Thank you. I'll try and get my little 15 month old daughter, who's got a terrific scream. Can you hang on a minute? I hope you got that.

Desert, desert air, stones, rocks, the aloneness of the desert .. the sort of scurrying, sandy, grainy quality - stars, wind, sculpted forms of the desert. Recollecting the scream, I make the scream articulate in a certain way. I suppose though it is a scream inside the head, it is really no longer a frontier moment. It must be understood as a kind of pathway and possibly a pathway through the head. The scream, of course, that I'm talking about is completely inaudible. It is for me the scream of screams. It's the most intensely heard scream that I know or that I am capable of making.

Well, I can't really scream because I'm at work. When is this open til? I'd love to do it at home. If this is an answering machine I would love to scream at home, so I'll ring you then, but since I have rung you anyway, I might as well just add a little scream ...

MUSIC AND COLLAGE OF SCREAMS

DR. WHITEHEAD: The screamscape is not just a collection of screams. Of course, we have screams, you could listen to screams for weeks here in the archive, but when we begin an investigation into a particular screamscape, we're trying to listen more to the underlying pressures, the more deeply buried pressures beneath the screams..... the pressures of the unspeakable.....

SOUNDS OF FOOTBALL, LION ROARING, COLLAGE OF SCREAMS

DR. WHITEHEAD: The scream, the scream - give in to the more chaotic nature, yes...

The scream, the scream.....

TELEPHONE
CALLER:

And I just like to scream, because I like it

DR. WHITEHEAD: Once we have the screams in the archive we try to let them take on lives of their own. The life that they want to lead. We take quite a bit of criticism for this but we find that some screams just want to...

COLLAGE OF SCREAMS AND MUSIC

TELEPHONE
CALLER:

Hello, it's me again, I forgot to leave my phone number. Do you want to hear me scream again OK, you asked for it, bud!

Goodbye and thanks.