

Wednesday, October 18, 3:00 pm, SSMS 2135

DOCUMENTARY AUDIBILITIES: Voice, Listening, and the Human



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In the field of documentary, voice, rather than point of view, is the prevailing metaphor for a filmmaker's unique perspective, signaling the documentary genre's emphasis on spoken words, as well as its enduring social mission of "giving voice." My talk will unpack the humanitarian resonances of this metaphor, in conversation with recent scholarship on race, sound, and listening. I will discuss how documentary's vocal conventions can normalize as well as undermine the complex hierarchies of race, gender, and other axes of difference implicated in the practices of giving voice and bearing witness.

Pooja Rangan is Assistant Professor of English in Film and Media Studies at Amherst College. She is the author of *Immediations: The Humanitarian Impulse in Documentary* (Duke UP 2017), and of numerous articles in journals including *Feminist Media Histories*, *Film Quarterly*, *Camera Obscura*, *World Picture*, and *differences*. Rangan is the co-editor, with Genevieve Yue, of a forthcoming special issue of the journal *Discourse* on "Documentary Audibilities." Her current research deals with the politics and aesthetics of accented speech and listening.

