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The Art of Listening

By Les Back



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The Art of Listening By Les Back

Our culture is one that speaks rather than listens. From reality TV to political rallies, there is a clamour to be heard, to narrate, and to receive attention. It reduces 'reality' to revelation and voyeurism.

The Art of Listening argues that this way of life is having severe and damaging consequences in a world that is increasingly globalized and where time and space is ever more rare. It addresses the question: how can we listen more carefully? Theory is combined with real stories from the experiences of the desperate stowaways who hide in the undercarriage of jet planes in order to seek asylum, to the young working-class people who use tattooing to commemorate a lost love.

Les Back shows how sociology is in a unique position to record 'life passed in living' and to listen to complex experiences with humility and ethical care, in opposition to the Babel of voyeurism that has taken hold in the mainstream media.



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