

## Noise as a Haunting Element in Don Delillo's *White Noise*

**Sangeeth S P**

Assistant Professor Department of English Malankara Catholic College Mariagiri, Kanyakumari Tamilnadu India Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu, India

### Abstract

This paper deals with the Fear of Noise in Don Delillo's *White Noise*. In the postindustrial era, American society has undergone marvelous development, the advancement and growth of modern technology and industrial civilization results in creating fear in human minds. Fear of noise focuses on commercial noise, industrial noise, human fear has been deeply analysed.

**KEYWORDS:** Noise, Fear, Media, Death, Phobia.

The Fear of Noises Phobias is known as different names they are Ligrophobia, acousticophobia, sonophobia, phonophobia or misophobia. All these different terms have their roots in Greek for 'Loud Noise', Sound or Alarm.

Misophonia, literally hatred of sound, was proposed in two thousand as a condition in which negative emotions, thoughts and physical reactions are triggered by specific sounds. It is also called 'select sound sensitivity syndrome and sound rage. The real world and from their true desires, what the mass media put out is more properly called "noise" or "phenomena" of interference that become obstacles to communication. Commercial noise works to jam communication between people and nature as well as between people and their own human nature, replacing the present day with mere signs or representations and substituting artificially induced wants for basic human needs. The natural world have come to replace the real thing, so too have media representations of human nature worked to distance us from ourselves. When Jack and Babette read to each other from their extensive library of pornographic literature.

The radio, television, and print media offer themselves as the means to fulfillment of all human needs, but these materialistic things provide lot of important news and also some movies which shows horror scenes and horror sounds it also gives fear to human. Now a days people were suffering because of acoustic ophobia find street noise music, dog barking noise and other common noise. People will feel irritated and upset when they cannot escape from the source of displeasure.

In this novel we could understand the explores of a train, which brings noise pollution in the city of Blacksmith and the people had afraid about the noise they were wandering here and there. The toxic event Nyodene D which release from the train is very poisonous. When Jack and Babette knew the seriousness of airborne toxic event they got into fear. As soon as it affects their life. This Fear of noise leads Jack and Babette into fear of death. Fear is the response for the horrible emotional and physical dangers in our life. Extreme fear may lead to subconscious behaviour. While the sound of explore which affected every person in the town of Blacksmith and they cause Fear. Fear of noise affects the human minds. In these era lots of explore were happening in all over the world. The sound of Bomb blast, Cracker, Crashes, are destroying the humans sleep.

Fireworks can be fun, amazing and entertaining. Most of the countries have celebrations with fireworks it is full of colourful, huge sounds and fire flames etc...but some people were afraid of loud noise.

Naxalits are playing with bombs, Men are fighting each other, countries are fighting each other. In their Issues noises are increases and the humans get into fear. Technology is made by human for doing the things easy but now that technology have more power to destroy the humans and nature.

Media critics have warned that one is enslaved by TV as a human machine in so far as the television viewers are no longer consumers, but intrinsic component pieces, input and output feedback that are no longer connected to the machine in such a way as to produce or use it. Rather than help consumers make the choices that are right for them as individuals by providing information about the variety and comparative quality of available products. "Sitting in front of the television screen, we have always to remember that, whatever else, programs are so much wrapping paper and that what is being wrapped up for delivery is us, an audience" (271). Television ads are unbelievable and it is not fit for people. It is only for the attraction for the viewers. If the viewers believe the ads and try to buy things it will become harmful for their health. There are plenty of ads which shown in the television.

Gladney's go to the supermarket and shopping mall, were they can buy some real food or life's necessities. The fruit which was displayed at the supermarket has been 'sprayed' till it is so 'burnished' and 'bright' that it looks like a picture in a guide to photography. At the mall, the Gladney find everything that TV has taught them to want. If the purchase and consumption of commodities makes them grow in value and self-regard it is because these products are viewed as a reflection of their owner's worth. The shopping mall has been described as a TV that they walk around in, for the images that people see in the mall are from television, but Gladneys discover that spectacular abundance presents a false choice. The many kinds of brightly colored packaging is never ending series of the same standardized, unfulfilling merchandise. The sight of his son Wilder went to the open cartoons, crumpled tinfoil, shiny bags of potato chips, bowls of plastic substances these are only for attraction. The result of a mall's aggressive ads combined with its bland atmosphere. When people realize that shopping does not enrich experience but instead the offers of signs believed by standardized banality. "One writer has pointed out that the hyped up over abundance of similar products plus the bland sameness of many mall environments make people feel lost"(Kowinki 338).

TV resembles Hitler in its dictatorial power over masses of viewers enthralled by its commercial messages. Rather than allow consumers access to product information that will enable buyers to select merchandise to their individual needs, the mass media engage in an aerial bombardment of target groups and hard-selling. According to Jean Baudrillard said that the "excess of information is a sort of electrocution. It produces a sort of continual short-circuit where the individual burns its circuits and loses its defences" (11).The world is to assure them to life's of continuity. After his mother's death, Jack's German tutor, Howard Dunlop, finds a sense of peace and security in watching TV meteorologist stand before a multicolored satellite photo and predict the weather. The viewers are so dependent on TV weatherman are also subject to sudden panic when satellite photos are lit up with the color of danger. Older people in particular were susceptible to news of impending calamity as it was forecast on TV by grave men

standing before digital radar maps or pulsing photographs of the planets. A prediction of heavy snow not only scares Blacksmith's senior citizens half of death, and it also drives them to the stores to stock up on items they feel they cannot do without in a disastrous storm. The weather report represents "the almost complete commodification of bodily maintenance in the face of year round weather threats and assaults." (Ross, 120)

What if death is nothing but sound? Electrical noise. You hear it forever. Sound all around. How awful. Uniform, white. Sometimes it sweeps over me, She said, Sometimes it insinuates itself into my mind, little by little. I try to talk it. Not now, Death. (228)

Now a days People were suffering because of Acousticophobia find street noise music and other common noise to be grating, even the sounds of human voice. People with this phobia will feel irritated and upset when they cannot escape from the source of displeasure.

Often, those who suffer from this phobia will be forced to change their life style and curtail their activities in order to stay away from noises that bother them. In our busy world, honking cars, screeching brakes and big machines abound, causing all manner of loud noises which may irritate. While most people learn to filter out the sounds that distract and annoy them, the person with Acousticophobia finds it impossible to focus on anything else.

Man is overwhelmed by the sheer number of material things, brand names, information, and codes in an entropic simulacra world those main functions is to cover up death. "The escape from the reality of death, achieved in the novel which conveyed through the media."(LeClair 213). Television merely severs to establish a historical atmosphere or setting, it has a deconstructive function in DeLillo's novels. Television constantly reduces or dissolves reality by replacing it with simulation. Death shows the darkness and also the uniformity is white.

We have looked at hundreds of crash sequences. Cars with cars. Cars with trucks. Trucks with buses. Motorcycles with cars. Cars with helicopters. Trucks with trucks. My students think these movies are prophetic. They mark the suicide wish of Technology. The drive to suicide, the hurtling rush of suicide. (250)

The train crash will produce loud noise which make the people to fear. This may pollute the environment. By the Growth of technologies, the humans are not getting proper oxygen from the present environment. In Ancient times, the people breathe good and fresh air and also they have good life span but now the environment is totally polluted and death rate is increasing day by day.

Modern technology may not have improved the world all that much, but it certainly has made life noisier. Unmuffled motorcycles, blaring car alarms, and roving boom boxes come first, second, and third on my list of most obnoxious noise offenders, but everyone could come up with his own version of aural hell. The technology has made its first appearances in the marketplace in certain narrow segments where the money for it is most forthcoming. Noise cancellation Technologies, one of the leaders in the field, has developed a noise- cancelling.

In 1970 Congress created the occupational Safety and Health Administration, and an important part of its agenda was to limit noise in the workplace. The Environmental protection Agency, empowered by the 1972 Noise Control Act, which Congress passed overwhelmingly, established an office of Noise Abatement and Control, but before the government could regulate noise in any sweeping way, someone had to figure out what noise was, and exactly what was so bad about it. Noise differs from other environmental pollutants in that it is both invisible and temporary. But noise resembles the others in that although noise is clearly terrible at an extreme. Other researchers busied themselves looking at the physiological consequences of noise, which proved little easier to measure. It has long been apparent that exposure to loud noise gradually causes deafness and sudden noise which may cause fear. The powerful vibrations damage the delicate hairs in the cochlea, which receive the sounds that are transmitted along the auditory nerve to the brain. But it has been more difficult to demonstrate other suspected connections, chiefly that of noise-related stress to heart disease. A team of researchers at the University of Miami found that protracted exposure to noise levels of 85 to 90 decibels, about lawnmower level, raised the blood pressure of rhesus monkeys for at least four months after the period of exposure. Such tests have been difficult to conduct on human beings, however, since it is nearly impossible to isolate noise from other sources of stress. There is some evidence that loud noise might even be pleasurable, because it causes an adrenaline surge that can feel like a caffeine rush, this might explain why some people jack up the volume on their boom boxes. Another reason might be that they have gone deaf. An audiologist looking into why New York City sirens so frequently exceeded permissible noise levels determined that a number of the senior firefighters who were buying powerful sirens had lost much of their hearing.

Due to the development of technology the noise is also increases and it affect the capacity of hearing, now a days environment is full of noise pollution, the environment are destroying because of the growing technology. There is enormous amount of green plants but for the beneficial purpose of human that greenery environmental are vanishing away. Mainly, the pollution increases the human lifetime and sufferings also increases. This may increase the fear. Annoyance response to transportation noise is considered to be quite a complex phenomenon. However, it is generally accepted to be the subjective discomfort associated with environmental noise exposure in humans and can be induced by individual perceptions of noisiness, disturbance to daily activities or a broadly negative feeling about the surrounding acoustic environment. One of the main characters affecting an individual's perception of sound as noise is its loudness or perceived intensity. It can be seen then that noise annoyance is subjective and this is primarily because, physiologically, individuals vary in their sensitivity to noise. Non acoustic factors such as age, socio- economic characteristics and fear of noise have been found to play a major role in determining individual reactions to noise in the form of annoyance scores.

Noise annoyance is generally associated with the indirect reaction chain in the human organism which is closely related to the initiation of emotional stress. Indeed, research studies have shown that individuals annoyed by noise tend to experience a series of negative emotions including anger, disappointment, unhappiness, withdrawal, distraction, anxiety, exhaustion and even depression. Thus, environmental noise has

negative impacts on a person's quality of life and often forces unwanted alterations in the everyday behaviour of individuals. According to Stansfeld and Matheson, conversation, watching television and listening to the radio are the activities most disturbed by aircraft noise, while traffic noise is often most disturbing for sleep but similarly affects every day behaviour negatively.

Road traffic noise is responsible for causing the greatest levels of annoyance. Netherlands where residents reported road traffic noise as being responsible for the greatest volume of people highly annoyed while noise from industry is the least. It is interesting to note also that the general trend is for a significant increase in annoyance from 1998 to 2003 and this trend holds for nearly all noise sources. These results generalize across Europe and imply that the problem of environmental noise is disimproving considerably over time. Of the various transport modes, rail is responsible for the least volume of annoyance in the general population; road based modes account for the most. Indeed, it has been shown repeatedly in attitudinal studies that the degree of noise annoyance depends on the mode of transport being considered.

Indeed, a recent study of annoyance due to mixed transportation noise in Hong Kong found that when both road and rail noise are present, road traffic noise induces annoyance, while rail noise has the opposite effect. Rather interestingly, the same study found that perceived noisiness is a better predictor of noise annoyance than the actual noise exposure level.

Some people may avoid babies, children and pets because they are often noisy. This phobia can impact relationships as some noise and confusion is basically given in families and other primary relationships. The person must need self confidence to overcome any situation. The person should remove the Fear of Noise and reclaim your right to enjoy in this world.

### **References:**

DeLillo, Don. *White Noise*. New York: Viking, 1984. Print.

LeClair, Tom. *In The Loop: Don DeLillo and the System Novel*. Urbana, IL:U of Illinois P,1987. Print.

William, SeveriniKowinski. *The Mallng of America: An Inside Look at the Great Consumer Paradise*. Stanford: UP, 1989. Print.

Ross, Andrew. *The Work of Nature in the Age of Electronic Emission. Social Text* 18 (1987-88): 123. Print.