**Discussion questions for week 11**

**2. What is the role of music/sound in dying and grieving? Discuss the practices of music thanatology and lamentation. Why is lamentation associated with women?**

Music and sound can be a spiritual repose from the suffering of dying. Music thanatology is a form of caring for the souls and bodies of dying people through live music in their final moments. Through music, whether song, chant or instrument, tonal substance is said to be woven into the body of the dying patient. The music brings peace and balance to the individual and dissolves fear within them. A final soothing of sorts to the unsolved pains of the patient's lives, that will reach no conclusion. This relates to philosopher’s Gilles Delouse’s theory that music is spiritualization of the body.

Sound and music can also be associated with the sound of grief, which is associated with feral intimacy in the text by Gunaratnam. Grief is believed to be a primary force of physical in human vocalization, whether through dirges or wailing. In ancient societies, public mourning and grieving was a task for women, as they were associated with emotions, even professionally. These women showed the maddening effects of grief through their actions, as they tore at their hair and clothes and beat their breasts. This lamentation marked personal loss but was also used to express a community’s world view, its pains and sufferings. Lament can also be a “formal genre intended to arouse an emotional response in the listener” (p 83). The unbounded sounds of grief can cause a great disturbance, as the bodily manifestation of loss can pit the griever against authority and social norms, like in the case of the raw crying African mother in the traditionally quiet British hospice.

**5. Discuss the three dimensions of conjuring alter-life that Murphy proposes. What is the problem with damage-based research and considering land as terra nullius and how is it tied to embodiment?**

Murphy’s first dimension of conjuring alter-life entanglement is admitting complicity in pollution, racism and violence and recognizing kinship with the environment and other bodies. By doing nothing and denying our responsibility in the matter, we are contributing to it and hurting others and ourselves in the process. Murphy states that eugenics is deeply entwined into the history of progressive scientific projects. Alterlife must therefore secondly be about overcoming these set structures, colonialism and eugenics. A part of this is refusing to participate in “damage-based research” which only concentrates on dissecting marginalized individuals and communities in such a way that they are deemed as pathological and devalued. Murphy’s final aspect of the alterlife is the capacity of becoming otherwise: “Embodiment has not just been altered, it is more generally open to alteration.” (p 10). Within alterlife there is a potential to dismantle harmful infrastructures and concepts and to learn another way of being and knowing.

Terra nullius is a legal term, meaning empty territory and it is used by the state to argue ownership of it, as it is found and belongs to nobody. This term has been crucial in the state’s theft of territory, owned by indigenous groups. In the statement “Our Bodies are not Terra Nullius” it is implied that damaging land is also damaging the body, as bodies are connected to the earth and its land.