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The Problems of Loudspeakers in Japan

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DATE: Thursday, February 7, 2008

TIME: 3:00-4:30pm

PLACE: Tokioka Room, Moore 319

What do pachinko parlors, political extremists and potato vendors in Japan have in common? They all use loudspeakers in public.

Although many people unfamiliar with Japan imagine quiet city streets and meditative tea ceremonies, the daily use of high-volume loudspeakers hand-held or mounted on vehicles by anybody with something to say creates city soundscapes in Japan that threatens the physical and mental health of citizens and raises critical freedom of speech issues.

Discussion of this important public policy question, which involves a difficult tension between free speech rights and the right to personal privacy from unwanted noise in public, will include audiovisual examples.

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