Variation in speech is useful to listeners.

Listeners use both talker-specific and socially informative phonetic information to organize newly encountered spoken variants. (Labov and Broadbent, 1957; Ngwa and Picone, 1998; Niedzielski, 1999; Hay and Drager 2006; Summer, Kim, King, and McGowan, 2013; McGowan, 2015)

Speaking reveals your identity, not merely your ideas.

Listeners can make accurate classifications of a speaker’s demographic (age, gender, sexuality, race) with limited phonetic input. Under 100 milliseconds! (Scharinger et al. 2010; Mack and Munson, 2010; Walker and Hay, 2011; Johnson, 2005)

Is Auditory Discrimination possible?
Purnell, Ildsardi, and Baugh (1999)

Here, Baugh presented each of his three native dialects to property managers on separate calls. Compared the number of responses he received per dialect to the demographics in the neighborhood.

The pattern is clear:
If a neighborhood is racially imbalanced, the property manager will prefer to interact with a speaker whose voice marks them for the majority racial group in the neighborhood.

YES.

WE SEE AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING.

Results from Purnell et al. (1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diatlect Group</th>
<th>East Palo Alto</th>
<th>Oakland</th>
<th>San Francisco</th>
<th>Palo Alto</th>
<th>Woodside</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAVE</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ChE</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>70.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of calls for each locale</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AAVE = African American Vernacular English; ChE = Chicago English; SAC = Standard American English.

Study One: Can listeners hear social class membership?

9 second samples of the first author’s three native dialects were played for 35 listeners, who were asked to rate them for perceived race, region, and for a variety of character attributes.

RESPONDENTS HEARD THREE DIFFERENT KELLY WRIGHTS

Are these dialects recognizable?

MUSE Sample
Raced at 89% White
Region Rating
14% Northeast 17% West Coast 17% East Coast

SouAm Sample
Raced as 97% White
Region Rating
71% South 2% Alabama, Texas, Georgia, Arkansas, respectively.

AAL Sample
Raced as 89% Black
Region Rating
29% South 22% East Coast

How many voices? 97% identified three distinct speakers.

Study Two: What Ideologies drive rental decisions?

Conducted a national survey of rental professionals
Size of Property, Rootedness, Language Experience

Describe your ideal tenant
• "Appealing" isn't really part of the process. All qualified applicants are accepted if units are available.
• "The first qualified applicant to apply gets the apartment."
• "I don't expect people to come dressed for a job interview, but that is essentially the first step.”
• "Be well spoken and considerate on the phone.”

Study Three: Ongoing!

Research Question
To what extent is auditory discrimination affecting parity of access in the contemporary housing market?

Matched-Guide Phone Calls to Property Managers Retesting The Bay Area
New Testing Knoxville, TN Suburban Detroit

Study Four: Phonetic Segmental Analysis

What are the phonetic cue listeners use to make such identifications?

Develop a List of Features which reliably map to these dialects

Establish Methodology as Empirical Linguistic Evidence for Future Experts

Contact me! raciolinguistic kellywri@umich.edu

Speech Samples, References, and Poster available at https://bit.ly/2GUcabT