
The Circulation of Psychoanalytic Listening Outside of the Clinic in Buenos Aires, Argentina

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Xochitl Marsilli-Vargas is an Assistant Professor in the department of Spanish and Linguistics at Emory University. Dr. Marsilli-Vargas' work centers on the reception and circulation of mental health discourses, media technologies, the anthropology of listening, and linguistic analysis. She received her PhD in cultural and linguistic anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley. Her book *Genres of Listening. An Ethnography of Psychoanalysis in Buenos Aires* (Duke University Press, 2021) is an ethnography of listening practices. It proposes that listening can be categorized into genres: just as there are many ways of speaking, there are many possible ways of listening. The empirical basis of her work has been Mexico, the United States, and Argentina where she has conducted extensive ethnographic fieldwork in rural, institutional and urban contexts.

In this presentation I analyze the constitution of genres of listening through the ethnographic study of psychoanalytic listening in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where personal identities, conceptions of citizenship, and constructions of the political, are rooted less in the performativity associated with speaking than on a particular form of listening based on psychoanalysis. In Buenos Aires, this listening is social, produced by a collectivity of individuals, and performed in all sorts of interactions surpassing class, age, and gender classifications. While there have been many studies that identify how linguistic practices create and transform contexts, the idea that listening has the potential of generating and sustaining social relations has not been similarly explored. What I call genres of listening differentially tune or guide the ear – and by extension eyes and bodies as well – to attend to some aspects of an utterance or sound while not attending to others; genres of listening thereby create contexts and frameworks of relevance that shape the listener's orientation at the moment of reception, thus shaping context and social identities.