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### **SUBMISSION**

Part II. Language and Migration: Experience and Memory  
*Princeton University*

### **TITLE**

*Listening to Migration on U.S. Spanish-Language Radio*

### **ABSTRACT**

Accompanying the rotation of Mexican-styled music on U.S. Spanish-language radio are vocal utterances of immigration and the immigrant experience. Over the southwest airwaves, listeners hear frequent references to la remesa (economic remittances) by morning show hosts; callers ask attorneys about paperwork received from the Department of Homeland Security; guest doctors are asked to “translate” U.S. medical prescriptions into a familiar Mexican context; and female callers seek the support of pop-psychologists in dealing with long-distance familial relationships. These on-air exchanges broadcast listeners’ migrant sensibilities and highlight their economic and racialized status in the United States.

Trade magazines credit the exponential growth of Spanish-language radio to booming Latinx population numbers. Yet, I argue that the on-air *conversation* around immigrant experiences is an important, overlooked facet. Spanish-language radio owes its phenomenal growth to listener-driven or talk-centered programming that candidly speaks to the political and economic realities of its listeners.

I stress the political significance of broadcasting in Spanish during times of tense, anti-immigrant sentiments. A close look at dialogues from call-in radio shows argues that the format of sound, the low cost of radio sets, and its real-time capabilities all lend themselves to fostering a sense of intimacy with Spanish-dominant, immigrant listeners.

abstract word count: 199

### **BIOGRAPHY**

[Dolores Inés Casillas](#) is Associate Professor in the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is the author of *Sounds of Belonging: U.S. Spanish-language Radio and Public Advocacy* (NYU Press, 2014), which received two book prizes and co-editor with María Elena Cepeda (Williams College) of the *Companion to Latina/o Media Studies* (Routledge Press, 2016) and co-editor with Mary Bucholtz and Jin Sook Lee (UC Santa Barbara) of *Feeling It: Language, Race and Affect in Latinx Youth Learning* (Routledge Press, 2018).

bio word count: 82