INTRODUCTION

1 Arlt, *Crónicas periodísticas* (www.elaleph.com), 53. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted. Arlt’s comment was part of a debate with the Communist Party leader Rodolfo Ghioldi. See Saittta, “Entre la cultura y la política,” 405.


3 For example, Karl Hagstrom Miller has recently demonstrated how the music industry in the United States shaped racial perceptions and associations in the early twentieth century. See Miller, *Segregating Sound*.


5 Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

6 For a useful account of this trend in cultural studies, see Storey, *Inventing Popular Culture*, 48–62.

7 Levine, “The Folklore of Industrial Society,” 1373.

8 Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*.

9 Lipsitz, *Time Passages*, 39–75. Lipsitz’s recovery of the possibility of alternative working-class readings of television programs echoes the conclusions of other
cultural historians from the United States. Michael Denning, for example, reveals the subversive meanings contained in the nineteenth-century dime novel. See Denning, *Mechanic Accents*.

10 Hansen, *Babel and Babylon*, 60–125.


12 Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, 3. For another formulation, see García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*.


15 Moreno, *Yankee Don’t Go Home!* For an account that stresses the influence of North American products, see Pérez, *On Becoming Cuban*. In the Argentine context, Ricardo Salvatore shows how the advertising agency J. Walter Thompson appropriated Argentine nationalism in order to sell mass consumer goods. See Salvatore, “Yankee Advertising in Buenos Aires,” 216–35.

16 McCann, *Hello, Hello Brazil*, 137–45.


18 On the evolution of consumption in Argentina, see Rocchi, “La americanización del consumo,” 131–89. On film imports, see 151. For the number of radio stations and movie theaters, see chapter 2.


21 Turino, “Nationalism and Latin American Music,” 193–94. For a similar account, see Vianna, *The Mystery of Samba*.

22 Chamosa, *The Argentine Folklore Movement*.

23 Several recent accounts of Latin American musical nationalism stress the role of the market alongside that of intellectuals and the state. See McCann, *Hello, Hello Brazil*, 34–40; Velázquez and Vaughan, “Mestizaje and Musical Nationalism in Mexico,” 107.

24 Even that most elitist of Argentine observers, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, seemed to recognize as much when he argued in 1845 that a truly national Argentine literature would have to focus on the savage countryside, rather than on the civilized, urban world of the Europeanized elite. Sarmiento, *Facundo*, 59–60.

25 This historiography is discussed in Agnew, “Coming Up for Air.” The Susman essays are in Susman, *Culture as History*. For consumerism as a cause of labor militancy in the 1930s, see Rosenzweig, “Eight Hours for What We Will,” 226–28. For a recent account of the way consumption and citizenship became linked in the United States, see McGovern, *Sold American*.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

27 Erenberg, Swingin’ the Dream.
28 Sklar, Movie-Made America, 195–214. The quote is from 196. For an account that emphasizes both the progressive and conservative elements in the Hollywood films of the 1930s, see Gary Gerstle’s discussion of Frank Capra in American Crucible, 170–75.
32 This is far too large a historiography to summarize here. For one recent summary, see Karush and Chamosa, Introduction, The New Cultural History of Peronism, 3–8.

1 CLASS FORMATION IN THE BARRIOS

1 The recording is almost certainly the Duke Ellington band in an improvisational passage. A stuttering, screaming trumpet follows a wild bass clarinet solo, a near cacophony that matches the images of urban chaos.
2 Sandrini played the role of Eusebio in the stage version of Los tres berretines. Sensing his star power, the filmmakers expanded his role when they adapted the script for the movie. See España, “El modelo institucional,” 41.
3 As Pablo Alabarces has pointed out, the film underscores the power of popular sport by casting a star forward, Miguel Angel Lauri, in the role of the soccer-playing son. Alabarces, Fútbol y patria, 60. But this casting choice also made it even more likely that Sandrini, an experienced comic actor, would steal the show.
4 Rocchi, Chimneys in the Desert.
7 Moya, Cousins and Strangers, 292.
8 Baily, Immigrants in the Lands of Promise, 194.
9 Miguez, Argeri, Bjerg, and Otero, “Hasta que la Argentina nos una,” 804–7.
10 Moya, Cousins and Strangers, 180–82. On Italian immigrants’ dispersion throughout the city, see Baily, Immigrants in the Lands of Promise, 123–24.
11 On the occupational distribution of Italian and Spanish immigrants in Buenos Aires, see Baily, Immigrants in the Lands of Promise, 100–102; Moya, Cousins and Strangers, 205–19.
12 Germani, Política y sociedad en una época de transición, 197–210.
14 Critica, June 4, 1928, 9.

Moya, Cousins and Strangers, 373–74. On anti-immigrant humor in the sainete, see Donald Castro, “The Image of the Creole Criminal in Argentine Popular Culture.”

Rock, Politics in Argentina, 220. By 1936 two-thirds of the population of the city of Buenos Aires was native-born. Walter, Politics and Urban Growth in Buenos Aires, 152.

Rock, Politics in Argentina, 232.


Shipley, “On the Outside Looking In.”

Rocchi, Chimneys in the Desert, 51.


Walter, Politics and Urban Growth in Buenos Aires, 84.


Moya, Cousins and Strangers, 216–18; Baily, Immigrants in the Lands of Promise, 93–120.

Moya, Cousins and Strangers, 274–75.

Fernando Devoto, Historia de los italianos en la Argentina, 372–78.

Rocchi, Chimneys in the Desert, 160–62.

On the zoning ordinance of 1914 see Scobie, Buenos Aires, 199. On industrial expansion in the barrios, see Walter, Politics and Urban Growth in Buenos Aires, 235–36.


The notion of conference attendance as a “desirable lifestyle” that could produce upward mobility is from ibid., 91. See also González Leandri, “Lo propio y lo ajeno,” 111.

Gorelik, La grilla y el parque, 277–306. See also Silvestri and Gorelik, “San Cristóbal Sur entre el Mataadero y el Parque.”


Historians of ethnic mutual-aid associations in Argentina have identified a similar phenomenon: leadership by a small, wealthy elite coexisted with
formal equality within the institutions and with a rhetoric that emphasized ethnic unity across class lines. Devoto and Fernández, “Mutualismo étnico, liderazgo y participación política,” 140.

39 On the CHADE affair, see de Privitello, Vecinos y ciudadanos, 149–82. Walter, Politics and Urban Growth in Buenos Aires, 173–75.


42 Canción Moderna 1, no. 4 (April 16, 1928).

43 Rocchi, Chimneys in the Desert, 50.

44 The shoe industrialist Luis Pascarella, cited in ibid., 62. The translation is Rocchi’s.


46 Canción Moderna 8, no. 299 (December 11, 1933).

47 Horowitz, Argentina’s Radical Party and Popular Mobilization; Karush, Workers or Citizens, 91.

48 Yrigoyen, Mi vida y mi doctrina, 137–38.

49 On non-pluralist democracy and on the efforts of pro-labor Radicals in the city of Rosario, see Karush, Workers or Citizens. On the avoidance of class-based appeals and on the similarities between Radicalism and Socialism in Buenos Aires, see de Privitello, Vecinos y ciudadanos, 87–99, 208–9. On Yrigoyen’s use of obrerismo, see Horowitz, Argentina’s Radical Party and Popular Mobilization, 115–47. See also Persello: El Partido Radical.


51 Rocchi, Chimneys in the Desert, 62.


53 Adamovsky, Historia de la clase media argentina, 135–216. See also Adamovsky, “Acerca de la relación entre el Radicalismo argentino y la ‘clase media’ (una vez más),” 209–51. Enrique Garguin agrees with Adamovsky’s periodization. See Garguin, “‘Los Argentinos descendemos de los Barcos,’” 161–84. Peru and Brazil represent contrasting cases. See Parker, The Idea of the Middle Class; Owensby, Intimate Ironies.

54 Míguez, “Familias de clase media,” 21–45.


56 Míguez, “Familias de clase media,” 38–42.


59 Jeremy Adelman argues that the pragmatism of Argentine workers reflected
the fact that as immigrants, they lacked “a heritage of opposition to the capitalist designs of the dominant class.” Adelman, “The Political Economy of Labour in Argentina,” 16.

60 Rock, Politics in Argentina; Horowitz, Argentina’s Radical Party and Popular Mobilization.


64 On the rise of the new industrial unions, see Durruty, Clase obrera y peronismo; Korzeniewicz, “Labor Unrest in Argentina,” 7–40. On the success of the Communists, see also Tamarin, The Argentine Labor Movement, esp. 152.

65 Carrera, La estrategia de la clase obrera—1936. On the location of strike incidents, see 84–85.

66 Adamovsky, Historia de la clase media argentina, 135–76.

67 Horowitz, Argentine Unions, the State and the Rise of Perón, 79–84, 105–9, 165–68.

68 Saítta, Regueros de tinta, 49, 73.

69 Ibid., 117.

70 Ibid., 55–90.

71 Ibid., 65–79.

72 Rivero, Una luz de almacén.

73 Los tres berretines, originally a sainete by Arnaldo Malfatti and Nicolás de las Lladeras, belongs to a tradition of Argentine theatrical works about the middle class. Adamovsky traces the origins of this tendency to the plays of Gregorio de Laferrère, Florencio Sánchez, and Federico Mertens written in the first decade of the twentieth century. See Adamovsky, Historia de la clase media argentina, 219–26. There are other films that belong to this tradition—Así es la vida (Múgica, 1939), also based on a play by Malfatti and de las Lladeras, is a well-known example—but they are far outnumbered by the melodramatic films discussed in chapter 3. As I argue in the epilogue, the 1950s and 1960s would witness the full flowering of this tradition.

2 THE TRANSNATIONAL MARKETPLACE

1 Appadurai, Modernity at Large, 32.


3 On Argentine enthusiasm for the culture of the United States in this period, see Sheinin, Argentina and the United States, 60–62.

of the Argentine recording industry, see Pujol, *Valentino en Buenos Aires*, 180–85. For a biographical account of Glücksmann as well as an analysis of his connections to the Jewish community, see Lewis, “Con Men, Cooks, and Cinema Kings,” 170–83.


6 On Glücksmann’s contests see Sierra, *Historia de la orquesta típica*, 87–89; Pinsón, “Los concursos de Max Glücksmann.”

7 Pujol, *Jazz al sur*, 43. In Brazil, too, Whiteman was a much bigger star than the swing bands led by African Americans like Duke Ellington and Count Basie. According to Bryan McCann, this perception resulted from the local success of the Hollywood Whiteman vehicle *King of Jazz* (*Anderson, 1930*). See McCann, *Hello, Hello Brazil*, 138. However, by the mid-1930s Ellington in particular had begun to attract the attention of Argentine jazz aficionados. See, for example, *Sintonía* 3, no. 98 (March 9, 1935).

8 *Canción Moderna* 1, no. 4 (April 16, 1928). In the mid-1920s advertisements for Max Glücksmann’s Discos Dobles Nacional invariably featured recordings of jazz and tango by the same artists. See, for example, *Caras y Caretas* (January 17, 1925), 17. On Firpo’s jazz recordings, see Pujol, *Jazz al sur*, 20–21.

9 *Canción Moderna* 1, no. 6 (April 30, 1928).

10 Ibid. 7, no. 289 (October 2, 1933).


12 Ibid., no. 91 (January 19, 1935). For another letter criticizing local radio stations for playing too much jazz, see *Sintonía* 6, no. 261 (April 21, 1938).


16 Thompson, *Tango*, 174–75.

17 On the transition from Old Guard to New Guard, see Labraña and Sebastián, *Tango*, 45–49.


19 *Sintonía* 5, no. 228 (September 2, 1937).

20 De Caro, *El tango en mis recuerdos*, 98.

21 *Sintonía* 3, no. 97 (March 2, 1935); *Sintonía* 5, no. 228 (September 2, 1937). Similarly, another member of the New Guard, the “master of the modernist tango,” Juan Carlos Cobián, was said to have brought back innovations from a trip to North America. *Canción Moderna* 1, no. 15 (July 2, 1928).

22 *Sintonía* 3, no. 115 (July 6, 1935).
23 Sierra, Historia de la orquesta típica, 51–53.
25 On the history of the bandoneón, see Zucchi, El tango, el bandoneón, y sus intérpretes.
27 On the Magaldi-Noda duo, see Amuchástegui, Agustín Magaldi, 53–66. Amuchástegui notes that the vogue for folk duos might have been inspired by popular Mexican acts of the period.
28 On criollista literature, see Prieto, El discurso criollista en la formación de la Argentina moderna. On the criollo circuses, see Chasteen, National Rhythms, African Roots, 51–70.
29 Collier, The Life, Music, and Times of Carlos Gardel, 43.
30 The tangos of Agustín Bardi and José Martínez stand out for their criollista lyrics, as does the early classic of Villoldo and Saborido, “La morocha.”
31 Canaro, Mis bodas de oro con el tango y mis memorias, 42–44.
33 Garramuño, Modernidades primitivas.
34 A useful account of the international tango craze is Cooper, “Tangomania in Europe and North America,” 67–104.
35 Savigliano, Tango and the Political Economy of Passion, 111. On the reception of tango in Europe, see also Matallana, Qué saben los pitucos.
36 To cite just one of many examples, Osvaldo Fresedo, a modernizing tango bandleader born and raised in the city of Buenos Aires, was pictured in the New York Times in 1930 dressed as a gaucho. See New York Times (March 30, 1930), XX12.
37 On the impact of Valentino in Argentina, see Pujol, Valentino en Buenos Aires, 107–10.
38 Garramuño, Modernidades primitivas, 223.
39 Lugones, El Payador.
40 Sintonía 3, no. 115 (July 6, 1935).
41 Ibid. 5, no. 208 (April 15, 1937).
42 Canción Moderna 7, no. 295 (November 13, 1933).
43 Sintonía 5, no. 208 (April 15, 1937). Ellipses in original.
44 Crítica, March 18, 1925, 7.
45 Ibid., June 13, 1928, 2. See also ibid., June 9, 1928, 12.
46 Canción Moderna 7, no. 297 (November 20, 1933).
48 Ibid. 6, no. 266 (May 26, 1938).
49 Ibid., no. 269 (June 16, 1938).
50 The price of records and phonographs as well as the 4.5 percent figure are from Castro, “The Massification of the Tango,” 94. The wage information is from Anuario “La Razón,” 219.
51 On the early years of radio, see Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 10–12; Gallo,
La radio, vol. 1; Ulanovsky et al., Días de radio, 16–22; Sarlo, La imaginación técnica, 109–22.

52 Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 147.

53 Writing in 1936, Edmundo Taybo estimated that there were 1.5 million receivers in Argentina. Cited in Castro, “The Massification of the Tango,” 94. In 1940 the U.S. Department of Commerce reported its best guess as “1,000,000 to 1,050,000” but also claimed that some 200,000 sets were sold in the country each year (World Radio Markets, 26). Claxton cites two estimates of roughly 1.2 million for 1934. See Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 146, 149. The population of Argentina in 1930 was 12,046,000.


55 Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 106.


57 Ibid., 137–38; Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 91–92.

58 La Nación, September 14, 1923, 12. On the Firpo-Dempsey fight, see also Gallo, La radio, vol. 1, 41.

59 See, for example, the ad for the locally produced Pekam receivers in La Nación, September 13, 1923, 16.

60 Ibid.


63 Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 73.


65 Dirección General de Correos y Telégrafos, Reorganización de los servicios de radiodifusión, 21.

66 Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 32.


68 Sintonía 9, no. 399 (July 9, 1941), 28; Caras y Caretas, January 25, 1936. On Yankelevich, see also Matallana, “Locos por la radio,” 81–90; Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 16, 31.

69 Lary May, The Big Tomorrow, 58–59; May, Screening Out the Past, 169–76.

70 De Paoli, Función social de la radiotelefonía, 43–51; “La Torre de Babel,” Sintonía 7, no. 303 (February 8, 1939).

71 Radiolandia 11, no. 538 (July 9, 1938). See also Sintonía 10, no. 425 (July 8, 1942).

72 Radiolandia 11, no. 538 (July 9, 1938).

73 Simari, Mi historia la escribo yo, 61–66. See also the tremendous attendance of fans anxious to bid farewell to Vermicelli, when Simari, dressed as his most popular character, left for Europe. Canción Moderna 7, no. 302 (December 30, 1933).

74 Monte, “Chispazos de tradición,” 47.

75 Sintonía 5, no. 231 (September 23, 1937).
76 Matallana, "Locos por la radio," 83–84.
77 On the wild popularity of Chispazos de Tradición, see Ulanovsky et al., Días de radio, 73–80. On the use of Chispazos scripts in the schools, see Canción Moderna 7, no. 290 (October 9, 1933).
78 See Canción Moderna 7, no. 300 (December 18, 1933); ibid., no. 301 (December 23, 1933).
79 On one contest on Radio Stentor, see ibid., no. 296 (November 20, 1933).
81 Caras y Caretas, December 19, 1936, 150.
82 Sintonía 1, no. 23 (September 30, 1933), 89–91.
84 Ibid., 95. These proportions hardly wavered between 1936 and 1941. Matallana emphasizes heterogeneity in her account of radio programming, but as these numbers suggest, this heterogeneity existed on the margins of a programming core that was quite similar up and down the dial.
85 For advertising rates, see Office of Inter-American Affairs, Data and Rates of Radio Stations in the Other American Republics and Puerto Rico, 15–18. On the program offerings of Radio Splendid and Radio Excelsior, see Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 36–39.
86 Sintonía 3, no. 100 (March 23, 1935).
89 Ibid., November 30, 1935, 8. For a description of the station’s programming plans, see ibid., November 28, 1935, 8. A couple of weeks after Radio El Mundo’s inauguration, Caras y Caretas applauded the station as “a guarantee of good taste and technical progress.” Caras y Caretas, December 7, 1935, 132.
90 Sintonía 3, no. 135 (November 23, 1935).
91 “La torre de Babel,” Sintonía 7, no. 300 (January 18, 1939).
92 Sintonía 6, no. 298 (January 4, 1939), 38. Dirección General de Correos y Telégrafos, Reorganización de los servicios de radiodifusión, 259–64.
93 Sarlo, La imaginación técnica, 114–15.
94 Canción Moderna 11, no. 401 (November 23, 1935).
95 Radiolandia 11, no. 538 (July 9, 1938).
96 Claxton, From Parsifal to Perón, 69–72.
97 Starr, The Creation of the Media, 367.
99 On early Argentine experiments in film, see Finkielman, The Film Industry in Argentina, 5–11.
100 Sarlo, La imaginación, 125–28.


103 As one scholar has recently argued, Latin American filmmakers of the silent era produced a “criollo aesthetic” that combined elements drawn from sources at home and in the United States and Europe in order to insert their nations into a “Euro-American modernity.” Rodríguez, “Latin American Silent Cinema,” 36.

104 Thompson, *Exporting Entertainment*.

105 Ibid., 78–79.


107 Thompson, *Exporting Entertainment*, 79.


110 Ibid., 34.

111 Ibid., 65–68.


113 Of course the influence likely went both ways: John Alton had an extensive and influential career in Hollywood after spending his formative years in Argentina. On Alton, see España, “John Alton,” *Cine Argentino*, vol. 1, 220–21. Another American cinematographer who enjoyed a long career in Argentina was Bob Roberts.

114 Schnitman, “The Argentine Film Industry,” 61–62. For one call for more Spanish-language films, see *Sintonía* 1, no. 15 (August 5, 1933), 79.

115 Finkielman, *The Film Industry in Argentina*, 166–84.

116 In 1910, for example, blue-collar workers constituted almost three-quarters of the audience for movies in New York City. Rosenzweig, “Eight Hours for What We Will,” 194.


121 Cited in Maranghello, “Cine y estado,” 27.


123 Ibid., September 7, 1934, 15. The film under review is the Carlos Gardel vehicle *Cuesta Abajo* (1934). See also ibid., May 23, 1935, 28, in which Néstor
congratulates the film Monte Criollo for avoiding “any base and distasteful notes, without concessions and with laudable dignity.” In a letter to Sintonía, one reader attacked Néstor’s persistent negativism in patriotic terms: “He does not do anything but speak ill of our national films. It is impossible to believe that this man is Argentine.” Sintonía 5, no. 232 (September 30, 1937).


To cite just one example, in its review of the Argentine films of 1935, Caras y Caretas denounced “plots from the slums, lunfardo expressions, and actors pulled from the theater where certain successes are achieved with dangerous ease.” Caras y Caretas, January 1, 1936.

La Razón, May 25, 1939, 15.

Arlt, Notas sobre el cinematógrafo, 82. On the masculine fear of foreign movie stars like Rudolph Valentino, see Pujol, Valentino en Buenos Aires, 107–10. Frustration over the inability to attain the lifestyles depicted in Hollywood films was a common reaction among moviegoers throughout the world in the 1920s. For the cases of the United States and Cuba, see Rosenzweig, “Eight Hours for What We Will,” 221; and Pérez, On Becoming Cuban, 290–353.

See Sintonía 5, no. 226 (August 19, 1937); Sintonía 5, no. 221 (July 15, 1937).

Radiolandia 13, no. 595 (August 12, 1939).

La Razón, July 7, 1938, 10. The film under review is Mujeres que trabajan (Romero, 1938).

Garramuño, Modernidades primitivas, 216–18.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Motion Pictures in Argentina and Brazil, 15.

Golden, Review of Foreign Film Markets during 1936, 176.

Golden, Motion Picture Markets of Latin America, 23.

El Mundo, June 29, 1939, 30–31, 34.

On Pompeya’s movie theater, see Romero, “Nueva Pompeya, libros y catecismo,” 176.

Golden, Motion Picture Markets of Latin America, 23–24. Average daily wage rates are listed on 19.

Cited in Tranchini, “El Cine Argentino y la construcción de un imaginario criollista.”

Golden, Motion Picture Markets of Latin America, 24.

See, for example, the descriptions of Riachuelo (Moglia Barth, 1934) and Ayúdame a vivir (Ferreyra, 1936) in El Heraldo del Cinematografista, July 11, 1934, and September 2, 1936. The U.S. Commerce Department commented in 1944 that “not so long ago” Argentine films were shown in only one first-run house in Buenos Aires.

I arrived at these numbers by cross-referencing the listings in El Mundo, June 29, 1939, 30–31, 34, with Manrupe and Portela, Un diccionario de films argentinos.

See chapter 5, below.

The forty-nine Argentine movies released in 1940 represented just 10 percent of the total number of films shown in the country that year.
3 REPACKAGING POPULAR MELODRAMA


3 Martín-Barbero, *Communication, Culture and Hegemony*, 167. See also Oroz, *Melodrama*.


5 Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

6 Williams, “‘Something Else besides a Mother,’” 320. On the “radical ambiguity” in melodrama, see Elsaesser, “Tales of Sound and Fury,” 47. Feminist film theorists have emphasized the structural instability of melodrama, even if they have disagreed over the extent to which particular films enable readings that question patriarchal ideology. See, for example, E. Ann Kaplan’s more skeptical interpretation of *Stella Dallas* (Vidor, 1937) in Kaplan, *Motherhood and Representation*, 149–79. Laura Podalsky has extended this sort of analysis to the Mexican “revolutionary melodrama.” Podalsky, “Disjointed Frames,” 57–71.


8 On the broad, cross-class appeal of the zarzuela in Buenos Aires, see Mc Cleary, “Popular, Elite and Mass Culture,” 1–27.


11 The poem is “Antífona Roja,” and the translated excerpts are from James, *Doña María’s Story*, 253. See Szmetan, “Enigmas sobre aspectos de la vida, y la relación con su obra, de Almatrefuente,” 219–30.


19 As Miriam Hansen suggests, commodification renders popular traditions...


21 All tango lyrics are from Romano, *Las letras del Tango*, unless otherwise noted, and all English translations are mine unless otherwise noted.


25 *Canción Moderna* 1, no. 9 (May 21, 1928).

26 Lyrics cited in Matamoro, *Ciudad del tango*, 117.


29 *Sintonía* 6, no. 298 (January 4, 1939).

30 Ibid. 1, no. 10 (July 1, 1933).

31 *Canción Moderna* 7, no. 294 (November 6, 1933).

32 On the symbolism of seamstresses and tuberculosis in Argentine popular melodrama, see Armus, “Tango, Gender, and Tuberculosis in Buenos Aires.”

33 Amuchástegui, *Agustín Magaldi*, 76.

34 Matamoro, *Ciudad del tango*, 116–46; Pablo Vila accepts Matamoro’s analysis of tango fatalism in part, but he argues that Matamoro fails to appreciate the significance of the social recognition that tango granted the popular sectors and that he ignores those tango lyrics which contested elite hegemony. Vila, “Tango to Folk,” 113–21.


37 Calistro et al., *Reportaje al cine argentino*, 238.

38 Néstor Pinsón, “Rosita Quiroga.”

39 *Sintonía* 1, no. 10 (July 1, 1933).

40 *Sintonía* 7, no. 329 (August 9, 1939).

41 Sarlo, *El imperio de los sentimientos*.

42 Ibid., 169.

43 Ibid., 63.

44 Ibid., 135.

45 Gledhill, “The Melodramatic Field,” 34.


47 Calistro et al., *Reportaje al cine argentino*, 77.


50 Ibid., 135. Elsewhere, Lamarque contrasted her own appeal to that of Tita Merello, who specialized in depicting women from the arrabales. Calistro et al., Reportaje al cine argentino, 97.


53 On the popularity of the tango among elite Argentines, see Matallana, Qué saben los pitucos, 19–20.

54 Paladino, “Libertad Lamarque, la reina de la lágrima,” 69. On elite consumption of tango, see Matamoro, La ciudad del tango, 96–103.


56 Oroz, Melodrama, 171 (italics in original).

57 España, “El modelo institucional,” 134. On Stella Dallas, see the works cited in note 6, above.

58 Laclau, “Towards a Theory of Populism.”

59 Arlt, “Ayer vi ganar a los argentinos.”

60 Crítica, June 4, 1928, 9.


62 Calistro et al., Reportaje al cine argentino, 152; Di Núbila, La época de oro, 72.

La Prensa’s reviewer commented on Sandrini’s tendency to play the same role in every film: “Is his repertoire the same? Does he keep repeating his old character from Los tres berretines? Certainly.” La Prensa, January 21, 1937, 16.

See also Pelletieri, “El ultimo actor popular,” 91–99.

63 A clear precedent for the character of the lovable thief is the criollo criminal celebrated in the sainete. See Castro, “The Sainete Porteño,” 46.

64 As María Valdez points out, Sandrini’s image as a “buenazo del barrio,” always willing to “jugarse por un amigo” is central to all his film characters. Valdez, “Luis Sandrini,” 45.

65 La Nación, September 19, 1940, 15.

66 Marshall and D’Anna, Niní Marshall, 72–73.


68 Marshall, Las travesuras de Niní, 28.

69 Pauls, Lino Palacio La infancia de la risa, 51–55.

70 Posadas, Niní Marshall, 113.

71 Marshall and D’Anna, Niní Marshall, 75.

72 Ibid., 64; Posadas, Niní Marshall, 23–24.


75 According to Sintonía’s radio reviewer, Marshall had managed what no one

76 La Prensa, July 7, 1938, 18.
77 Marshall and D'Anna, Niní Marshall, 77, 81.
78 Sintonía 7, no. 326 (July 19, 1939).
79 Ibid. 7, no. 330 (August 16, 1939).
80 Ibid. 7, no. 326 (July 19, 1939).
81 The term “white telephone film” comes from the Italian cinema of the 1930s, in which these escapist movies set among the wealthy proliferated. See Hay, “Placing Cinema, Fascism, and the Nation in a Diagram of Italian Modernity,” 115–37.
82 Posadas, Niní Marshall, 69.
83 The Legrand twins would go on to star as “innocent girls” (ingénues) in dozens of similar comedies: Di Núbila, La época de oro, 336–37.

4 MASS-CULTURAL NATION BUILDING

1 Guy, Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires, 142–44. Analogous to this crackdown on the tango were elite attempts to enforce good sportsmanship among working-class soccer players. See Frydenberg, “Prácticas y valores en el proceso de popularización del fútbol, Buenos Aires,” 7–29.
2 Finchelstein, Transatlantic Fascism. See also Spektorowski, The Origins of Argentina’s Revolution of the Right; Deutsch, Las Derechas; Buchrucker, Nacionalismo y Peronismo.
3 Quattrocchi-Woisson, Los males de la memoria.
4 Sarlo, Una modernidad periférica, 215–46.
5 Martínez Estrada, La cabeza de Goliat, 202.
6 One example is Linyera’s tango “Boedo” (1927), which juxtaposes the quintessential tango barrio with the more pretentious Florida neighborhood: “¿Qué quiere hacer esa fifí Florida? / ¡Si vos ponés tu corazón canyengue / como una flor en el ojal prendida / en los balcones de cada bulín!” (What can that fancy Florida do? / If you put your workingman’s heart like a flower in a boutonniere / in the balconies of every guy’s pad). Linyera’s real name was Francisco Bautista Rimoli.
7 Canción Moderna 1, no. 6 (April 30, 1928).
9 Ulla, Tango, rebelión y nostalgia, 76–79.
11 Canción Moderna 7, no. 295 (November 13, 1933).
12 Ibid., no. 289 (October 2, 1933).
13 Radiolandia 11, no. 545 (August 27, 1938).
14 Ibid., no. 536 (June 25, 1938).
15 Ibid., no. 533 (June 4, 1938).
16 Ibid., no. 538 (July 9, 1938).
17 Ibid., no. 537 (July 2, 1938).
18 In 1933 Canción Moderna argued that lyricists like Alfredo Le Pera should be praised for avoiding lunfardo, but five years later, the magazine insisted that improving tango lyrics did not require doing away with the porteño argot:
   Radiolandia 11, no. 545 (August 27, 1938).
19 Sintonía 3, no. 94 (February 9, 1935).
20 Ibid., no. 101 (March 30, 1935).
21 Ibid., no. 90 (January 12, 1935).
22 Ibid., no. 92 (January 26, 1935).
23 Sintonia 1, no. 10 (July 1, 1933).
24 Ibid. 3, no. 100 (March 23, 1935).
25 Antena 8, no. 397 (October 1, 1938).
26 Sintonia 6, no. 271 (June 30, 1938).
27 Ibid.
28 Canción Moderna 7, no. 297 (November 27, 1933).
29 De Caro, El tango en mis recuerdos, 99.
30 Sintonia 6, no. 228 (September 2, 1937). Dajos Bela, who was Jewish, led a successful dance band in Berlin before the rise of the Nazis. In 1935 he relocated to Buenos Aires.
31 Ibid. 5, no. 208 (April 15, 1937).
32 Radiolandia 11, no. 538 (July 9, 1938); ibid., no. 545 (August 27, 1938).
33 Canción Moderna, October 12, 1935.
34 De Caro, El tango en mis recuerdos, 35. Blas Matamoro stresses de Caro’s position as a member of the “middle class with status pretensions.” Matamoro, La ciudad del tango, 108.
35 Sierra, Historia de la orquesta típica, 99.
36 Radiolandia 11, no. 538 (July 9, 1938).
37 Sintonia 6, no. 228 (September 2, 1937).
38 For example, the folk pianist Argentino Valle’s “Pampita” is described as a milonga pampeana in ibid. 3, no. 98 (March 9, 1935), while Ciriaco Ortiz’s version of “Soy porteño” is described as a milonga tangueda, played with authentic porteño flavor, in ibid., no. 125 (September 14, 1935).
40 Interview with Piana in Göttling, Tango, melancólico testigo, 88.
41 The most recent and most exhaustive account of Tango’s African origins is Thompson, Tango.
43 For Kordon’s articles on the African origins of tango, see Sintonia 6, no. 226
(August 19, 1937), ibid. 5, no. 211 (May 6, 1937), ibid., no. 212 (May 13, 1937), among others. For Kordon’s denunciation of jazz, see ibid., no. 210 (April 29, 1937).

44 Radiolandia 15, no. 690 (June 7, 1941).

45 According to Robert Farris Thompson, Piana himself was inspired by these international musical trends. See Thompson, Tango, 131.

46 “Liberation of the drum” is a phrase coined by Ned Sublette in Cuba and Its Music, 433.


48 Blomberg and Paz, Bajo la santa federación.

49 Sintonía 7, no. 305 (February 22, 1939).

50 Ibid. 6, no. 270 (June 23, 1938). Sintonía’s editors signaled their partial disagreement with this piece by printing it alongside photos of de Caro and Fresedo, with extremely flattering captions. Incidentally, tango historians often emphasize the differences between de Caro, whose music always featured polyphony and rhythmic counterpoint, and Fresedo, who pursued melody and harmony. See, for example, Labraña and Sebastián, Tango, 49. But as the piece from Sintonía indicates, at the time the two were commonly lumped together as melodic and harmonic innovators, defined in opposition to the “King of the Beat,” Juan D’Arienzo.

51 Antena 8, no. 394 (September 10, 1938). Antena frequently praised de Caro for having achieved the perfect balance between rhythm and melody: “The genre that Julio De Caro’s band now cultivates is in perfect accord with the tastes of the public, which enjoys rhythm but also appreciates when the melodic concept is not forgotten.” Ibid. 8, no. 396 (September 24, 1938).

52 Sintonía 6, no. 265 (May 19, 1938).

53 Radiolandia 11, no. 538 (July 9, 1938).

54 Suriano, Anarquistas, 145–73.

55 On the Artistas del Pueblo, see Frank, Los Artistas del Pueblo. The quote from Facio is cited and translated on page 172. On the Boedo group, see Leland, The Last Happy Men, 38–44, 57–66.

56 Saítta, Regueros de tinta, 105–8.


58 On Manzi’s participation in FORJA, see Salas, Homero Manzi y su tiempo, 155–70.


60 Reprinted in Manzi, Sur, 97.

61 Ibid., 116–17.

62 Cited in Ford, Homero Manzi, 84.

63 Cited in ibid., 79. The ellipses are in Ford. On Manzi’s ambivalent view of Gardel, see Salas, Homero Manzi y su tiempo, 126–30.

64 On Manzi’s lyrics, see Ulla, Tango, rebelión y nostalgia, 122–29; Salas, Homero Manzi y su tiempo, 120–24, 134–46, 171–81.

65 Ford, Homero Manzi, 82.
67 Manzi’s nostalgia for rural Argentina may have reflected his memories of the small town of Añatuya in the province of Santiago del Estero, where he lived as a child before moving to the Buenos Aires barrio of Pompeya. See Alén Lascano, “Homero Manzi,” 8–27.
70 Maranghello, *Artistas argentinos asociados*, 34.
71 Ibid., 17.
74 *Sintonía* 10, no. 425 (July 8, 1942).
77 *Los caranchos de la Florida* is based on the novel of the same name by Benito Lynch (1916). Like his contemporary Ricardo Güiraldes, Lynch was a criollista novelist who depicted the gaucho as a domesticated peon, lacking the rebelliousness and proclivity to violence that defined the gaucho in nineteenth-century literature. Slatta, *Gauchos and the Vanishing Frontier*, 191–92.
80 *Sintonía* 9, no. 400 (July 23, 1941), 78. *Prisioneros de la tierra* won an Argentine critics’ poll as the best domestic film of 1939. See *El Heraldo del Cinegrafista* 10, no. 44 (January 17, 1940), 8.
81 *El Mundo*, September 1, 1938, 21.
82 On Ford’s influence on Soffici, see Di Núbila, *La época de oro*, 264.
83 Chamosa, *The Argentine Folklore Movement*.
84 Alén Lascano, “Cuando el folklore llegó a Buenos Aires,” 64–75.
85 Cited in ibid., 68.
86 *Canción Moderna* 7, no. 294 (November 6, 1933).
87 *Sintonía* 7, no. 309 (March 22, 1939).
88 Ibid. 10, no. 431 (December 30, 1942). On Ochoa’s Cafiaspirina program, see the ad in *Radiolandia* 15, no. 693 (June 28, 1941).
89 See, for example, *Sintonía* 6, no. 261 (April 21, 1938); *Sintonía* 7, no. 298 (January 4, 1939).
90 Ibid. 6, no. 263 (May 5, 1938).
91 *Antena* 11, no. 570 (January 22, 1942).
92 *Sintonía* 7, no. 314 (April 26, 1939).
93 *Radiolandia* 11, no. 526 (April 16, 1938).
94 Lattes, “La dinámica de la población rural en la Argentina.”
95 *Sintonía* 1, no. 22 (September 23, 1933), 7.
96 *Radiolandia* 11, no. 526 (April 16, 1938).
97 On Luna, see Almeida de Gargiulo, de Yanzi, and de Vera, *Buenaventura Luna*.
98 *Sintonía* 6, no. 260 (April 14, 1938).
99 *Antena* 8, no. 397 (October 1, 1938).
100 *Sintonía* 9, no. 402 (August 20, 1941).
101 *Sintonía* 7, no. 314 (April 26, 1939).
102 Almeida de Gargiulo, de Yanzi, and de Vera, *Buenaventura Luna*, 52.
103 *Antena*, October 29, 1938. The second ellipsis is in the original.
104 On Romero’s film career, see Insaauralde, *Manuel Romero*; Mallimacci and Marrone, eds., *Cine e imaginario social*.
106 España, “Los muchachos de antes no usaban gomina,” 229.
107 Sommer, *Foundational Fictions*. Of course, *Birth of a Nation* (Griffith, 1915) is the paradigmatic case of a cinematic national romance.

112 María Valdez has noted that *La rubia del camino* differs from its Hollywood model in that the repartee is entirely one-sided; Julián, unlike Peter, does not participate in the wisecracking. Valdez, “El reino de la comedia,” 287. Clearly, Julián’s seriousness results from the melodramatic logic of the film: as the embodiment of the poor, he is a study in nobility and dignity, not a character who is particularly apt to express sarcasm or lighthearted humor.

113 The recurring joke in *It Happened One Night*, in which Peter erects “the walls of Jericho”—a blanket hung on a string—between his bed and Ellie’s has no counterpart in *La rubia del camino*, which shies away from this sort of erotic tease. This prudishness likely had multiple causes, but it follows logically from the identification of Julián—and poor people more generally—as the essence of moral rectitude.

114 Romero’s celebration of working women is most explicit in *Mujeres que trabajan* (1938). The contrast with Libertad Lamarque’s films is striking. In both *Besos brujos* and *Puerta cerrada*, Lamarque promises to give up her artistic career upon marriage.

115 See Hershfield, *Imagining la Chica Moderna*.

5 POLITICIZING POPULISM

1 On Perón’s mass media policies, see Ciria, *Cultura y política popular*; Sirvén, *Perón y los medios de comunicación*. On the expropriation of the newspapers, see Cane, *The Fourth Enemy*.

2 Luis Alberto Romero has pointed out that Peronism disseminated existing cultural models, rather than inventing new ones, but he emphasizes the traditionalism implicit in those models, rather than the populist current I have identified. See Romero, *Breve historia contemporánea de la Argentina*, 160–62.

3 James, *Resistance and Integration*, 26–27; James, *Doña María’s Story*, 255.


9 Falicov, “Hollywood’s Rogue Neighbor,” 245–60. The best-known case of such censorship was the banning of Charlie Chaplin’s *The Great Dictator* in 1941. The film was not shown in Buenos Aires until 1945.


13 On the advent of cinematic protectionism after 1943, see Kriger, Cine y peronismo, 27–55.
15 Cited in Matallana, Locos por la radio, 174.
17 Sirvén, Perón y los medios de comunicación, 116–18.
18 Cane, The Fourth Enemy, 199–232.
20 Pujol, Discépolo, 354–55.
21 Petit de Murat, Este cine argentino, 55.
23 Maranghello, “Los exílios,” 170–72. For Lamarque’s version of her notorious run-in with Eva Perón, see Lamarque, Libertad Lamarque, 211–18; For the story of Hugo del Carríl’s falling out with Apold, see Nudler, “La gran marcha,” 52.
24 On Peronist propaganda films, see Kriger, Cine y peronismo, 111–33.
25 On the efforts of Amadori and Argentina Sono Film, the studio that hired Apold, to ingratiate themselves with the Perón regime, see Manetti, “Argentina Sono Film,” 189–205.
26 Di Núbila, Historia del cine argentino, vol. 2; Falicov, “Argentine Cinema and the Construction of National Popular Identity,” 66; Barnard, “Popular Cinema and Populist Politics,” Argentine Cinema, 43–49. “Banal” is Alberto Ciria’s term, while “anodyne” is the judgment of Claudio España and Ricardo Manetti. See Ciria, Cultura y política popular, 259; España and Manetti, “El cine argentino, una estética especular,” 269. Only very recently has the notion of Perón-era cinema as pure escapism begun to be challenged, most notably in Kriger, Cine y peronismo.
27 Petit de Murat, Este cine argentino, 55.
29 España and Manetti, El cine argentino, una estética especular,” 274.
30 On Dios se lo pague, see Kriger, Cine y peronismo, 217–22; Paranaguá, “Populismo y hibridación,” 331–54.
31 España, Luis César Amadori, 38.
32 Posadas, Niní Marshall, 67. On Navidad de los pobres, see also Kriger, Cine y peronismo, 209–12.
34 Kriger, Cine y peronismo, 189.
37 Ramacciotti and Valobra, eds., *Generando el Peronismo*.
41 Grau, *Los Pérez García y yo*, 10. See also Cosse, “Relaciones de pareja a mediados de siglo en las representaciones de la radio porteña,” 131–53.
42 This brief account of the history of folk music in the Perón era is drawn from Chamosa, “Criollo and Peronist,” 113–42.
43 Matallana, “Locos por la radio,” 95.
44 Tormo, “Chamamé de sobrepaso, charla entre Antonio Tormo y León Gieco.”
45 Vitale, “Fui vocero de los cabecitas.”
49 Vila, “Tango to Folk,” 124–32.
52 Rivero, *Una luz de almacén*, 84.
53 The divito style was named for the cartoonist Guillermo Divito, who sought to make fun of the poorly dressed. As Natalia Milanesio points out, the style was based on the outfits that turn-of-the-century compadritos would wear, and thus already had an association with tango. See Milanesio, “Peronists and Cabecitas,” 68–69. Ernesto Goldar affirms that many tango fans dressed as divitos: Goldar, *Buenos Aires*, 60. On Castillo’s use of the divito style and his embodiment of working-class Peronist identity, see Salas, “Relaciones tango y política,” 133. On Castillo’s performance of “Así se baila el tango,” see Aresi, “Alberto Castillo, el cantor de los milongueros (El tango es danza de rango).”
55 Cited in Salas, *El tango*, 297.
57 On Manzi’s relationship with Peronism, see Salas, *Homero Manzi y su tiempo*, 241–70.
58 On Discépolo’s radio show, see Pujol, *Discépolo*, 372–85; Vila, “Tango to Folk,” 128–30. For the scripts themselves, see Discépolín, *¿A mí me la vas a contar?*
59 See, for example, Goldar, *Buenos Aires*, 138–43. Goldar points out that even Alberto Castillo’s big hits of the 1950s were no longer tangos.
60 Rock, *Politics in Argentina*, 301.

Perón, *El pueblo quiere saber de qué se trata*, 238.

Elena, “Peronist Consumer Politics and the Problem of Domesticating Markets in Argentina,” 111–49. The quotation is from 118, and the translation is Elena’s.

Quoted in Sigal and Verón, *Perón o muerte*, 66.

Quoted in James, *Resistance and Integration*, 24. The translation is his.


On Peronist anti-intellectualism, see James, *Resistance and Integration*, 22.


From Perón’s speech on Labor Day, May 1, 1944. Ibid., 49. On the centrality of working-class respectability within Peronism, see Gené, *Un mundo feliz*.

Quoted in Sigal and Verón, *Perón o muerte*, 50.


As Valeria Manzano has argued, the cinema of the earlier period tended to depict femininity and labor as mutually exclusive. See Manzano, “Trabajadoras en la pantalla plateada,” 267–89.

James, *Resistance and Integration*, 18. The emphasis is his.

On Perón’s debt to, and reformulation of, Fascism, see Finchelstein, *Transatlantic Fascism*, 163–71.

James, *Doña Maria’s Story*, 240–41.

Weinstein, “‘They Don’t Even Look like Women Workers,’” 161–76.


Perón, *My Mission in Life (La razón de mi vida)*, 144–45.

During the economic decline of the early 1950s, Perón criticized Argentine consumers for living beyond their means. See Elena, “Peronist Consumer Politics and the Problem of Domesticating Markets in Argentina,” 138.

James Brennan and Marcelo Rougier demonstrate that even though Perón faced the opposition of the owners of well-established, large industrial firms who dominated the Unión Industrial Argentina, other segments of the incipient “national bourgeoisie” did support him. Brennan and Rougier, *The Politics of National Capitalism*, 17–40.
88 Milanesio, “Peronists and Cabecitas.”
89 Adamovsky, Historia de la clase media argentina, 245–47.
90 Weinstein, “They Don’t Even Look like Women Workers,” 173.
91 James, Resistance and Integration, 30.

EPILOGUE: THE RISE OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

1 Adamovsky, Historia de la clase media argentina, 364–78. Adamovsky emphasizes the “anti-plebeian” character of Argentine middle-class identity. See also Garguin, “Los Argentinos descendemos de los Barcos,” 161–84.
3 Chamosa, The Argentine Folklore Movement, 293.
7 Pujol, "Rebeldes y modernos," 289–93.
10 Gravano, El silencio y la porfia, 133. Horacio Guarany, Los Cantores de Quilla-Huasi, Los Fronterizos, and Los Chalchaleros all recorded the song between 1957 and 1962.
11 Zaldívar, La zamba, 38.
12 Adamovsky, Historia de la clase media argentina, 327–403. La Familia Falcón was the brainchild of the advertising agency J. Walter Thompson. See Ulanovsky, Itkin, and Sirvén, Estamos en el aire, 181–82.
13 Both plays were written by Arnaldo Malfatti and Nicolás de las Llanderas.
14 Adamovsky, Historia de la clase media argentina, 395. As Adamovsky points out, the wedding took place in the middle of the coup of 1955.
17 Goldar, Buenos Aires, 77–79; Podalsky, Specular City, 66.
20 The term “impossible game” was coined by O’Donnell, Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism, 166–92.
22 Alabarces, *Entre gatos y violadores*.
23 Pujol, “Rebeldes y modernos,” 311–12. See also Pujol, *La década rebelde*.
24 The best account of the evolution of working-class consciousness in this period remains James, *Resistance and Integration*.
25 On the Cordobazo and its aftermath, see Brennan, *The Labor Wars in Córdoba*.