

of archived and ephemeral performances seems better suited to the materials Blanco Cano has chosen to examine than Anderson's print-centric analysis.

Although I very much enjoyed the opportunity to read these four essays together, I found two elements of Blanco Cano's analyses a bit disconcerting. First, reading these four chapters in sequence leaves the impression that only Mexico City *mestizas* can assume parodic, ironic, or satirical postures; the latter two chapters portray southeastern indigenous women engaged in earnest social justice movements. Among the many things that the Zapatistas' international prominence has taught us has been the prevalence of humor among indigenous movements as well. Second, for the purpose of demonstrating dissidence, Blanco Cano often relies upon straw-man representations of scholarship, particularly history and anthropology, and in places offers distortions. She asserts that the nationalist postrevolutionary film industry promoted the gendered dyad of the abnegating Virgen de Guadalupe and the promiscuous, traitorous Malinche, but this dichotomy long predates the revolution. Her characterization of Mexican historical studies as nationalist and homogenizing badly misrepresents the historical scholarship of the past several decades, which asserts that history "almost always rests on the necessity to legitimate a governmental regime and not to respond to the plurality of citizens" (76). Although it becomes clear that by "history" Blanco Cano means officially sanctioned textbooks and nineteenth-century historians such as Vicente Riva Palacio, she might acknowledge that the material for these performances came itself from critical historical scholarship.

At just over two hundred pages, the book is a reasonable length for classroom use, but it does assume both a reasonable background in Mexican history and an understanding of the texts and performances under consideration. Although the book includes ample visual evidence and Blanco Cano offers rich descriptions of the texts and performances, classroom discussions would work best if individual chapters were paired with the material under consideration.

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SANDRA MCGEE DEUTSCH: *Crossing Borders, Claiming a Nation: A History of Argentine Jewish Women, 1880-1955*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

Sandra McGee Deutsch has produced a significant contribution in *Crossing Borders, Claiming a Nation: A History of Argentine Jewish Women, 1880-1955*, a moving and beautiful book assessing how women pursued meaningful lives in difficult circumstances. This study deepens our understanding of women's

experiences and challenges future scholars to examine women in other groups for comparison. By exploring the many ways Jewish women engaged in communal, local, civic and national institutions, the author evocatively illustrates the multiple hurdles and opportunities these actors faced. Deutsch presents a set of themes – borders, inclusion and exclusion, race, transnationalism and state formation – to better understand how Jewish women negotiated the realities of life in Argentina and contested, supported or submitted to assumptions of race, gender, class and religion. The book is divided into eight thematic chapters and includes an introduction and conclusion. Source materials include newspaper reports, meeting minutes, archival materials from repositories spread over four continents, and a remarkably extensive and rich collection of informant interviews and oral histories. The result is an impressive book that humanizes the many experiences of Jewish women in rural and urban Argentina.

The first two chapters draw the contours of the history of Jewish immigration, settlement and adaptation in agricultural colonies, in small towns, and in Buenos Aires. In the countryside, women faced more difficulty finding educational opportunities than women in the capital due to the urgencies of farm work and distance from schools. Yet, many women who pursued their education became teachers and returned to transform schools and libraries into important community institutions. In the capital, Jews tended to live in specific neighborhoods and many women labored to find well-paying jobs. For most Jewish women homemaking was the principal occupation before 1955. Like their counterparts in the rural zones, women served important functions in maintaining a sense of community through joining clubs, preparing food, and participating in rituals such as weddings. Interestingly, class barriers were more rigid among Jews than provenance, complicating assumptions about the Ashkenazi/Sephardic binary. Prejudice and insecurity were real concerns for Jewish women; however, aggressive anti-Semitism did not emerge until after 1930.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine particular vocations practiced by Jewish women. The former examines women who pursued professional careers in education, medicine and entertainment. Each vignette introduces the reader to an extraordinary person who achieved professional success despite significant social, political or institutional obstacles. The importance of teachers is especially revealing as Deutsch demonstrates how Jewish women educators deepened democratic practices, advanced the liberal project and fought discrimination daily in the classroom. Chapter 4 examines Jewish women and prostitution; a choice made because little is known of the practitioners themselves and the trade disproportionately challenged Jewish perceptions of their place in local society. While much of the narrative on Jewish prostitution was framed in the white slavery narrative, the author notes that a woman's economic situation was the primary

motivation to enter the trade. Some women suffered tremendous exploitation from pimps and madams and others parlayed their earnings to pursue more respectable vocations.

Chapter 5 examines how Jewish families attempted to monitor and regulate the sexuality of their daughters, as impropriety was perceived to threaten claims to a space in Argentina. As a result, an economic niche brokering marriages emerged and questions about endogamy and exogamy highlighted the tension between managing young girls and their corresponding resistance to being overseen.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 examine the movements by which Jewish women established associations to battle economic violence, injustice, intolerant ideologies, and pursue philanthropy at home and abroad. While centrist and rightist women orbited towards philanthropy and Zionism, leftist women became important actors in Anarchist, Socialist, Communist and labor movements. Many of these women acted heroically, transgressing borders and using organized parties and individual activities in pursuit of a better world. Radical politics, thus, inspired many women to challenge the anti-Semitism of the Nacionalistas after 1930 and support materially and personally the Republican effort during the Spanish Civil War. Jewish women made up both prominent and rank-and-file members of the Junta de la Victoria, which supported the Allied effort during the Second World War and the Liga Argentina por los Derechos del Hombre. Jewish women had a complex relationship with the Peronist state, as union members were relegated to the margins, while at the same time general economic policy benefited the broader community. Philanthropic activities allowed wealthy Jewish women to cross societal borders by performing “argentinidad” and claiming a space in society while reinforcing class boundaries within the collectivity. The emergence of the Peronist welfare state eroded the *raison d'être* of these philanthropies, and as a result many of these women turned toward supporting Zionist efforts and state building once Israel achieved its independence.

The themes of borders and notions of inclusion and exclusion guide these chapters. Women helped to reinforce boundaries and strengthen cultural identities, fostering a sense of community and yet excluding other Jews who did not meet their perceived requirements. At the same time, Jewish women transgressed religious boundaries to contest exclusion by religious or patriarchal conventions, to challenge economic violence, and to claim a place in the broader Argentine society. As one informant told the author, “We thought the world could be different.” Jewish women also became agents in the development of Argentina through their roles as teachers, labor activists and philanthropists. Their roles also transcended national borders as many women fit into transnational political, cultural or ideological networks. These observations mark two of the more notable contributions. While much of the book is forceful and conclusive, a

subtler discussion of race would have better illustrated the concept's plasticity for both Argentines and Jews in Argentina. This is but a minor quibble. Deutsch details the activities of Jewish women and pivots the focus from institutions to the many experiences – tragic and blessed, heroic and silenced – that Jewish women, both distinguished and unknown, faced daily. The result is a moving portrait of women and their children as they pursued meaningful lives and transformed Argentine culture, politics and society during the period between 1880 and 1955.

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RAANAN REIN: *Los Bohemios de Villa Crespo: judíos y fútbol en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires, Sudamericana, 2012.

Siempre es una buena noticia que un historiador distinguido, como lo es Raanan Rein, decida volcar el fruto de sus investigaciones en un libro de divulgación destinado al gran público, género poco valorado por la academia pero mucho más difícil de lo que suele pensarse.

El libro sigue paso a paso la imbricación que se produjo entre el club Atlanta y la colectividad judía de Villa Crespo –uno de los barrios de mayor presencia en Buenos Aires–, desde el ingreso del primer judío a la Comisión Directiva en 1922, hasta la edad de oro de la entidad en los años sesenta, marcada por la presidencia de ese fascinante personaje que fue León Kolbowski, comunista, empresario, activista barrial, cooperativista y, además, dirigente futbolístico de primer nivel. Incluye también un capítulo final que extiende el relato hasta llegar a la actualidad. En fin, se trata de un fresco de las formas de sociabilidad y la vida cotidiana de tres generaciones de judíos argentinos, de tiempos en los que la colectividad tenía una diversidad, una vitalidad y un progresismo que, por comparación, hoy parecen perdidos. Siendo un libro de divulgación, uno no esperaría encontrar mucho más que ese fresco, de por sí fascinante, y un fragmento de la historia futbolística de Argentina. Y sin embargo, el trabajo de Rein contiene mucho más que eso. La investigación presenta valiosos aportes que dialogan y enriquecen la historiografía argentina. El espacio es breve, así que me concentraré en los que me parecen los principales.

Para empezar, el libro propone una interesante discusión con los estudios sobre inmigración y etnicidad. Como bien apunta el autor, la tradición intelectual latinoamericana en general (y la argentina en particular) ha rechazado la etnicidad como dimensión y como categoría analítica, enfocándose en cambio en la construcción de ciudadanía o en las identidades de clase. Efectivamente, las divisiones políticas fundamentales no se han presentado aquí como divisiones