

tends that the Cold War as an idea — rather than a categorical period or a popular mindset in the United States or the Soviet Union — has yet to be properly historicized. He, above all, calls for ground-breaking shifts in Cold War studies along two key axes: time and space. Whereas most now speak of a global Cold War that took place primarily between three or more actors in the so-called Third World, Stephanson somewhat oddly asks that the conflict be re-centered in its place of origin. The Cold War — invented in 1947 by renowned U.S. columnist Walter Lippmann — was exceptionally a U.S. project and should be understood strictly as such. While there were many Cold Wars in the second half of the twentieth century, the idea of the Cold War in its original form ended in the early 1960s, following the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The aforementioned Odd Arne Westad, whose contribution follows Stephanson's, directly rebuts the latter's containment of Cold War borders, going as far as accusing the former of reductionism. "Reducing the history of the Cold War to be a section of the history of the United States," Westad forcefully contends, "is neither methodologically meaningful nor historiographically liberating" (57). The Cold War, after all, is not U.S.-driven story. The United States, in other words, did not dictate the Cold War; rather it was a product of global power negotiations. Westad—whose scholarship has, in the last decade or so, transformed Cold War studies—in turn suggests an alternative model, which essentially elaborates on his previous appeal to pluralize the Cold War, rather than center it on Europe and North America.

After reading *Uncertain Empire*, many will easily conclude that the Cold War and its myriad shades continue to be a vibrant site of contestation in academic imaginations. Some may even argue that, on a discursive level, the Cold War is far from over. And others will surely disagree. But thanks to Isaac and Bell's volume, the terrain in which "the" Cold War is discussed has been revitalized. For this reason, this book merits a long-shelf life.

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Matthew B. Karush, *Culture of Class: Radio and Cinema in the Making of a Divided Argentina, 1920-1946* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

In the last pages of Karush's book, the reader is situated in the world announced by the coming of the television and a new youth culture symbolised by jeans and rock 'n' roll. It seems that he or she has travelled a long journey in order to reach a point that most likely readers of the book know perfectly. As Andrés di Tella suffers in his documentary film, *La televisión y yo* (2002), most of the readers would recognise that the television is the key source in getting to understand our

20th century culture and how it compounds the profile of the history and the future of that particular society. Now we are probably living a new change in the mass media that will involve a total transformation in our way of thinking about ourselves. According to this, the book explains which media, and therefore, which society provides this change in the moment the Cold War was reorganising Western civilisation, especially in a peripheral country such as Argentina, before television appeared.

The author uses Miriam Hansen's concept of "alternative modernism" to focus on how mass media (cinema and radio) introduced a series of elements (some of them contradictory), that shaped the construction of the middle and also the working classes (8, 44). The question of the identity of class is crucial in the development of historical and cultural national identities before and after the Second World War. As you advance through the book, where a perfect narration of social disposition and cultural activity during the period studied is depicted, we come to see that Peronism was the last episode of Argentina's part in the Cold War. In other words, Argentina was a country with a big population of European immigrants and a powerful rural oligarchy. Consequently, it achieved a well-founded status that enabled mass media to create a solid public sphere. A "culture of mixture" founded on urban and rural mentalities, as Beatriz Sarlo maintains to define this period, purport the legitimacy that this media had in representing the past and projecting the future (6).

Needless to say, the analysis of the elements used to explain how the classes looked for their identity portrays also the importance of the young people of that time in representing the possibilities of modernization. The terms were success or failure, the definition of gender and sexual difference, or the assortment of the family. They were the main discourses that nourished melodrama as the trope invoked in order to make a proposal for the representation of classes, genders, and new social conditions. From rags-to-riches stories to a groundbreaking realism, these narrations served as a catalogue of interpretation for this new modernising world. In addition to this, melodrama was also a book of instructions for understanding society, as Carlos Monsiváis has also explained writing about Mexican cinema and popular culture for that period. Indeed, if we have to refer to popular cultural and music, both play a crucial role in the formation of the concept of class. One of the main points in the book seems to stress the importance of sound nature in cinema and radio. It is obvious that the sound condition of both media is something that connects them. Moreover, the power of music (the tango and folk music) or *lunfardo* (Buenos Aires popular slang) in contact with proper Spanish; all of which contribute to create a national identity, added to the Argentinean literature.

In this sense, it is very important to acknowledge the historian Karush for having made an intelligent use of the sources. Having relied on the

Argentinean Cinema bibliography, he would probably have fallen in the film buff condition and the relevant attention given to the image analysis in its traditional books. Otherwise, the book examines in detail the protagonistic role of music (its diffusion through theatre culture but in radio) in the first spoken films, as well as the role played by singers such as Carlos Gardel or Azucena Maizani, and later, Libertad Lamarque or Tita Merello, just to cite some different but accomplished stars. We cannot forget how important tango music and dance were in the construction of Argentina's international image. Mass media helped it to serve as a representation of the community. Furthermore, tango enabled an international circulation of Argentinean culture. The book offers a wonderful journey from the origins of tango in the *conventillos* and popular feasts to the itinerant role in live performing. Its immortality will come with discs and films, although tango was already popular in France and Spain in the thirties, reaching an international audience who yearned for modernity.

To sum up, the meticulous use of newspapers and reviews, the combination of analysis between filmic genres and directors, the broad attention given to mass media producers, the neat historian procedure, make this book a wonderful insight into a crucial time in Argentinean cultural history.

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E.R. "Ernie" Forbes, *The Education of an Innocent: An Autobiography* by E.R. "Ernie" Forbes (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 2012).

Ernie Forbes' *The Education of an Innocent* contributes to a relatively small historical sub-discipline: historians' autobiographies. Its total length is 142 pages, which includes an index, a brief introduction by Stephen Dutcher, and an interview with Forbes conducted by current Acadiensis editor and well-known regional historian John Reid. Ernie Forbes is one of those historians who "needs no introduction." He is best known as a key figure in the broader rethinking of Atlantic Canadian history that began in the 1970s and continues, although in different forms, today. *The Education of an Innocent* is only peripherally about this significant historiographical change. Instead, as Dutcher notes, it is a "personal history, a close self-portrait" that looks back on the author's childhood, family, friends, and working life. In many ways, Forbes has retained his innocence. Indeed, one might argue that his education - if, by education we mean integration into the scholarly milieu of the last generation - remains incomplete. This is the great merit of this short book.

There is much that one can learn from *The Education of an Innocent*. One