assumed that Haiti had regained its sovereignty. And all chapters are buttressed by a wide array of tables and figures from little-known sources that are conveniently presented at the end. All in all, it is an outstanding book and deserves to be translated into English and/or Spanish as soon as possible.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. **49** (2017). doi:10.1017/S0022216X17000918

Donna Guy, *Creating Charismatic Bonds in Argentina: Letters to Juan and Eva Perón* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2016), pp. vii + 173, $95.00, $29.95 pb.

The difficulties of historical research in Argentina are well known: a national archive that has in the past suffered neglect, flooding, lack of financial resources and the attentions of hungry rats; other archives that are sometimes widely dispersed, sporadically maintained and haphazardly filed; and, in the case of the 1946–55 Peronist government, the efforts of the *Revolución Libertadora* that overthrew Juan D. Perón in 1955. In its enthusiasm for expunging all traces of Peronism, many valuable documents, photographs and other records were lost, to say nothing of the hospitals, schools and installations of the Eva Perón Foundation that succumbed to neglect or outright destruction. In this context, it is often assumed that no records remain of the myriad letters sent to Juan and Eva Perón, both to the Foundation and in response to government calls for public participation in Perón's two five-year plans.

As Donna Guy notes, the slightly haphazard filing system of national archives may have proved a blessing in this case, with letters coming to light in government ministries and other files. While it may never be possible to find more than a representative sample of these letters – or to know how they were dealt with, as many lack follow-up documentation – this is nevertheless a valuable contribution to our insights into the Peronist government and its correspondents. These correspondents' letters solicited both help and favours, and offered suggestions that were at times incorporated into government policy. They facilitated 'charismatic bonds' and also underscored the reciprocal nature of relations between leaders and followers – relations that could be described as 'patron–client' but which also reflect the very real belief that those in power had an obligation to provide personal benefits for their people. Clearly these correspondents believed that they were within their rights to ask for those benefits from Perón and Evita, and the content of these letters is fascinating.

As Guy rightly points out, Perón and Evita were not the first Argentine leaders to encourage letter-writing from the citizenry. This was an accepted form even under Spanish rule, with the illiterate making use of the services of notaries or other officials. But from the mid-nineteenth century in particular, with the focus on public education under Presidents Domingo F. Sarmiento (1868–74) and Nicolás Avellaneda (1874–80), written correspondence became more common. Under Hipólito Yrigoyen (1916–22; 1928–30), the poor were encouraged to write to the president, who was known for philanthropic activities and received petitioners personally even when president. Yrigoyen operated both individually and through the Sociedad de Beneficencia, the publicly subsidised charity set up by Bernardino Rivadavia in 1823 to offer social provision for the needy, and which later became notorious as Evita's *bête noire*, a group of society ladies who purportedly humiliated the poor in their charge and used the Sociedad as a conduit for social events and Catholic piety.

Both Perón and Evita took the letter-writing idea still further, just as they advanced in the sophisticated use of mass media that Yrigoyen had begun to exploit when the media remained a nascent channel for popular communication. Letter-writing could generate support and gratitude, and also a feeling of connection and involvement, as in the case of his call for suggestions for the five-year plan. If most of their suggestions fell by the wayside, citizens still felt they had been consulted and had participated in the process.

In practice, and as has often been the case, Guy places undue emphasis on the Peronist antipathy to the Sociedad de Beneficencia. Even before Perón became president moves were under way to professionalise provision of social services through the state rather than through charity, and by its own admission the Sociedad had become inadequate to the task. Similarly, immigrant organisations were becoming obsolete as a means of aiding their own communities, not least because the inflows of immigrants had been much reduced by the 1930s and 1940s. The Sociedad's liquidation was not primarily down to Evita's wrath, although it clearly provided what she regarded as a guide for how not to provide social justice.

Evita and the Eva Perón Foundation arguably did little to institutionalise social provision, although their resources and their industriousness far outstripped the Sociedad even in its best days. The common practice of writing to Evita to request a pension, medicines, a school place or entry into military service for a wayward son – micro-level requests that by definition would seem to be beyond the purview of the president or his wife – bears witness to the lack of institutions and the inability of official bureaucracy to address these problems through normal channels, with the Foundation arguably papering over cracks rather than resolving these deficiencies. Moreover, anti-Peronists would have claimed that the practice of writing to the First Lady to plead for an interview, a mattress, a job or a set of false teeth was perhaps as humiliating as the sight of orphans, heads shaved, being paraded by the society ladies to beg for charitable donations. In fact, as Guy points out, for many correspondents it was a way to feel linked to the First Lady and to feel that she was aware of their situation – a need not dissimilar to the motivations behind reality and confessional TV today.

There are a few odd confusions in the text that might have benefited from copy-editing – Guy states that Mary Main wrote under the name Fleur Cowles (Cowles, a well-known writer married to the publisher of *Look* magazine, wrote under her own name), and refers to the writer María Flores (Main's actual pen name) as a separate person; and she appears to confuse the Children's City built by Evita in the capital with the Children's Republic built by Governor Domingo Mercante near La Plata. Nevertheless, this is a fascinating insight into the construction of long-standing emotional bonds that have kept Peronism at the centre of Argentine politics even 70 years later, and into the two-way nature of that process, in which citizens projected their aspirations onto their leaders and expected to be taken into consideration in return.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. **49** (2017). doi:10.1017/S0022216X1700092X

Christina D. Abreu, *Rhythms of Race: Cuban Musicians and the Making of Latino New York City and Miami, 1940–1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), pp. xiii + 303, $29.95 pb; $24.99 E-book

The history of Latin popular music and its role in the formulation of the notion of *latinidad* in the United States is complex in its geographical and historical scope.