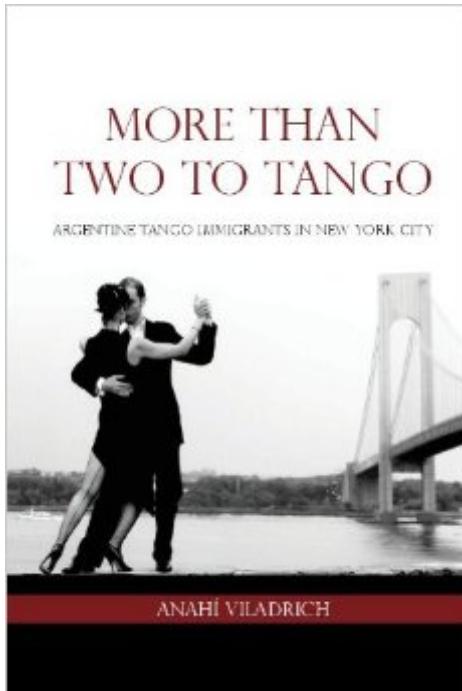


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More Than Two To Tango: Argentine Tango Immigrants In New York City



Synopsis

The world of Argentine tango presents a glamorous façade of music and movement. Yet the immigrant artists whose livelihoods depend on the US tango industry receive little attention beyond their enigmatic public personas. *More Than Two to Tango* offers a detailed portrait of Argentine immigrants for whom tango is both an art form and a means of survival. Based on a highly visible group of performers within the almost hidden population of Argentines in the United States, *More than Two to Tango* addresses broader questions on the understudied role of informal webs in the entertainment field. Through the voices of both early generations of immigrants and the latest wave of newcomers, Ana María Viladrich explores how the dancers, musicians, and singers utilize their complex social networks to survive as artists and immigrants. She reveals a diverse community navigating issues of identity, class, and race as they struggle with practical concerns, such as the high cost of living in New York City and affordable health care. Argentina's social history serves as the compelling backdrop for understanding the trajectory of tango performers, and Viladrich uses these foundations to explore their current unified front to keep tango as their own authentic expression. Yet social ties are no panacea for struggling immigrants. Even as *More Than Two to Tango* offers the notion that each person is truly conceived and transformed by their journeys around the globe, it challenges rosy portraits of Argentine tango artists by uncovering how their glamorous representations veil their difficulties to make ends meet in the global entertainment industry. In the end, the portrait of Argentine tango performers' diverse career paths contributes to our larger understanding of who may attain the "American Dream" and redefines what that means for tango artists.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Viladrich's book explores the social webs that support the careers of Argentine artists in the US, and particularly in NYC. Viladrich's ethnographic perspective is embedded in a fascinating narrative that retraces the complex ways through which a researcher ends up (re) defining her own path within the tango world, along with gaining a deeper understanding of Argentina's racial and ethnic categories. The book remarkable reveals the voices of tango artists, along with her own experience as an Argentine immigrant in New York City who devoted herself to study her own national community. So yes, this book is about the complex lives of a conspicuous group of artists, but it is much more than that. It is also about the ways through which Argentines living abroad embrace tango as a national icon and forge an emotional bonding with their compatriots both abroad and at home.

This is a cutting-edge, ground-breaking study written by an expert on immigration. As far as I know, there are no other studies on Argentinean immigrants, and even less on the trials and tribulations experienced by tango artists from argentine origin. The book is beautifully written, provocative and extremely thoughtful. It is an example of what good ethnographies are and how original studies focused on cross-disciplinary issues (e.g., tackling on immigration and the arts) can be addressed in a creative and impressive ways.

I think that it's a very good book. It's a research, not easy to write, with detailed experiences, talks and sources of the Argentine immigrants working as tango teachers, musicians, dancers, giving their daily energies to US public. They are artists looking for a space to live, trying to have the respect of many persons with their art. With pictures of performances, it is easy to understand what means Tango for this group which finally will create a family, friends and roots in the USA. Students, young or old american people will have the opportunity to comprehend and know about of the Argentine culture in the past and through the present days. This is not the first publication of Anahi Viladrich. Graduated in Sociology from the Univ. of Bs Aires and with various Master's Degree and highest honors given by Columbia University, what she writes demonstrate a deep understanding in this field.

Viladrich offers an in depth analysis of Argentine immigrants for whom Tango is a career as well as

a means for survival in an unforgiving city such as New York. Her research intertwines social theory with personal vignettes as an illustration of social phenomena in both private and public spheres; she immerses the reader into the lives of these immigrants without losing academic rigor. Her field work is extensive and provides both a clear understanding of the background and evolution of Tango as an art form as well as the current struggle of the members of this community for survival in New York City. More Than Two To Tango is a pristine academic work both enlightening for social science scholars as well as enjoyable for the layperson.

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