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Nota di contenuto	CONTENTS; ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS; 1. Introduction: Writing in and of the Era of the Typewriter; 2. Office Life in 1920s' Buenos Aires and Montevideo: Visions of Purgatory; 3. The 1930s: From Social Criticism to Creative Disillusion; 4. Mario Benedetti: Uruguay, the Office Republic; 5. 1940s' Argentina: From Alienation to Bureaucratic Nightmare; 6. Argentine Bureaucracy from the 1950s to the 1970s: The Enemy within; 7. Uruguay from the 1960s: Bureaucracies of the Absurd; Conclusion: Globalisation and the Writer-functionary; SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY; INDEX
Sommario/riassunto	Office-based writers from both sides of the River Plate chronicle the twentieth century. Martel's <i>La bolsa</i> (1891) initiates, and Dorfman's <i>Reader</i> (1995) concludes, a study of the white-collar citizens of Buenos Aires and Montevideo in their daytime habitat: the office. The literary background is the European literature of bureaucracy: Balzac, Galdos, Gogol, Dickens, Dostoyevsky, Kafka; the theoretical approach is through the sociologists Max Weber and C. Wright Mills; the historical context is the twentieth century: the decline of European power and the ascendancy of the USA; two World Wars; the Wall Street crash; communism and fascism. Through the eyes of Arlt, Benedetti, Campodonico, Cortazar, De Castro, Denevi, Fernandez, Marechal,

Mariani, Martinez Estrada, Onetti and Ricci, we observe life on both sides of the River Plate, as the two countries succumb to polarisation, repression and, eventually, military dictatorship. This is the twentieth century, viewed by a bewildered, frequently anguished participant: the person at the next desk. PAUL R. JORDAN lectures in Hispanic Studies at the University of Sheffield.

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