Durham E-Theses

The politics of looking:: photography and memory in (post-)dictatorship Argentina

Richardson, Alexia

How to cite:

Use policy

The Politics of Looking:
Photography and Memory in (Post-)dictatorship Argentina

Alexia Richardson

Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts

Department of Spanish
School of Modern Languages and Cultures
University of Durham

2004

Declaration

No material contained in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

Statement of Copyright

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

Declaration

No material contained in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

It is hardly possible to consider the period of state terrorism in Argentina without coming across photographic images concerning it. Exhibitions such as *Escenas de los '80* (Scenes of the 80s) at the Fundación Proa in Buenos Aires, and *Buena Memoria* (Good Memory) by Marcelo Brodsky have brought images of the so-called 'Dirty War' and its victims into art galleries.[1] Meanwhile, the Buenos Aires-based archive *Memoria Abierta* (Open Memory), a collaborative project by several human rights groups, is collecting and digitalizing several thousand images of the dictatorship with an eventual view to publishing them on the World Wide Web, in addition to the commemorative web sites featuring images of disappeared persons which already exist in cyberspace. In the centre of Buenos Aires, mothers of the disappeared still hold photographs of their children on their weekly marches, and their developing stories continue to be pictured in the press. Finally, in the genre of film, hitherto unseen footage of the trial of the junta leaders formed the documentary *El Nuremberg Argentino*.[2] Yet despite the proliferation of images circulating in Argentina and beyond, they have thus far received little critical attention.

This thesis is focused on issues of memory and looking in photographs from Argentina, and asks what the relationship is between photographs and discourses of memory. Photography is intimately connected with memory; while images are frequently perceived as containers of memory, in fact their relation with the process of remembering is both complex and contested. I will argue that photography in post-dictatorship Argentina deserves greater attention than it has hitherto received. Now, a time when issues of memory have come to the fore nationally and internationally in the legal, cultural and political spheres, is an opportune moment to examine images of the

---

[1] The term 'Dirty War' was coined by the generals themselves to refer to their campaign against 'subversion' in Argentina, and implies that an armed conflict between two sides was conducted. For this reason, it is a contentious term, disguising the fact that most victims were unarmed civilians. Many scholars and activists now refer to the dictatorship as a period of state terrorism. However, I have chosen to use the expression, as it is a widely recognised label for the period, while remaining aware of its controversial nature.

[2] *El Nuremberg Argentino*. Dir. Miguel Rodriguez Arías. Argentina. 2002. The still photographic image also features prominently in fictional films about the period of state terrorism, such as *La Amiga/The Female Friend* (dir. Jeanine Meerapfel, Argentina/West Germany, 1989) and *La historia oficial/The Official Version* (dir. Luis Puenzo, Argentina, 1985)

dictatorship in their developing contexts in the twenty-first century. Are they vehicles of collective memory or do they contribute more to forgetfulness? Does their ubiquity lead to indifference on the part of the viewer? Before we can look at photographs and their relationship to memory in Argentine cultural politics in detail, however, we need to survey the recent surge of interest in memory studies. It is also necessary to account for the importance of memory in Latin America specifically, and to set out the historical and political contexts that underlie the legacy of state terrorism.

A Memory Boom

In his recent work *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory,* Andreas Huyssen speaks of a 'memory boom'.[3] Likewise, Susannah Radstone identifies an 'explosion of interest in memory' in the humanities and certain branches of the social sciences.[4] Scholars from a range of disciplines including sociology, history, cultural studies, literature and psychology have displayed a concern with issues of memory, particularly traumatic memory, that has intensified since the late 1970s. The result has been a proliferation of publications on the subject, of which Radstone and Huyssen's volumes are just two examples.[5] However, the attention paid to memory has not been limited to the academic community, but has manifested itself in an abundance of memorials, monuments, museums, archives, commemorative ceremonies, anniversaries and cultural productions. But what is it about the current cultural moment that makes us so interested in memory?

---

[3] Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 18.

[4] Susannah Radstone, *Memory and Methodology* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), p. 1.

[5] Further examples include Paul Antze and Michael Lambek, eds, *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Jan Assman, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', *New German Critique,* 65 (1995), 125-33; Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer, *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1999); Jonathan Boyarin, ed., *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory,* trans. by Steven Randall and Elizabeth Claman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); Susannah Radstone and Katherine Hodgkin, eds, *Regimes of Memory* (London: Routledge, 2003); Richard Terdiman, *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993).

While no simple answer to this question is possible, several factors may be identified as being symptomatic of, and central to, the growth of interest in memory, particularly in the West. These include, firstly, the continuing preoccupation with the Second World War and its aftermath, notably the fortieth and fiftieth anniversaries of significant events which have been marked with widespread commemorations.[6] Together with this, the Holocaust and its legacy, which I will discuss further below, has become a fundamental aspect of memory discourse. In addition, the end of the Cold War, and the subsequent re-examination of power and conflict in Eastern Europe and between the former superpowers, has opened up new arenas of debate over the memory of conflict.[7] At the same time, on a conceptual level, the notoriously elusive cultural phenomenon known as postmodernism raises interest in the subjectivity of memory as opposed to the more rigid discipline of history, with its claims of objectivity. Conversely, a similar preoccupation with the possibility of forgetting has been apparent in the discussion of remembering.

Although there is little agreement about its exact meaning, since the 1960s postmodernism has been associated with a turn away from the modernist faith in rationality and progress which has been prevalent in Western societies since the Enlightenment. Postmodernism has been understood as calling into question grand narratives such as 'the advancement of reason, the emancipation of man, progressive self-knowledge, and the freedom of the will'.[8] The postmodern era is thus one of fragmentation, discontinuity, local narratives, attention to the personal and the Other.[9] All these factors may lead to an emphasis on the importance of local narratives, including personal and collective memories.

The Holocaust is generally agreed to represent a focal point in the examination of memory, and texts on this subject alone contribute greatly to the field of memory

---

[6] Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, p. 12.
[7] T.G.Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper, 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures, and Dynamics', in *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 3-85 (p. 5).
[8] Martin Hopenhayn, 'Postmodernism and Neoliberalism in Latin America', in John Beverley, José Oviedo and Michael Aronna (eds), *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), pp. 93-109 (p. 94).
[9] Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, pp. 42-52.

studies.[10] Although the Holocaust has been identified both as 'a unique loss and as an icon of loss for the world', there is a tendency to make use of the symbolism of this catastrophe and apply its lessons to other contexts, without fully taking into account the complexities of each case.[11] Huyssen calls the Holocaust 'a universal trope for historical trauma', and one wonders with him whether the Holocaust may not act as a screen memory, disguising the truth of other instances of genocide and horror.[12] Tim Cole has criticized the commodification of the Holocaust, stating that 'Shoah business is big business'.[13] He concurs with Huyssen that the Holocaust has become an icon of pain and suffering, and he notes the ever-increasing number of memorials, films, postcards, books and museums on the subject, without being convinced that they add to our knowledge of the reality of the Holocaust.[14]

The impossibility of accurately representing the Holocaust, which has been frequently pointed out by commentators, complicates any consideration of it. Dori Laub has characterized the Holocaust as an event with no witnesses, as almost all victims were killed, survivors are unable to articulate such an overwhelming experience, and outsiders are unable to comprehend its magnitude.[15] Attempts to portray it fully are, therefore, doomed to failure, with photographic images necessarily selective in their view.[16] Yet the Holocaust is the most striking and emblematic example of collective trauma in the twentieth century. Many other catastrophic events have also taken place, however, and it is since the Vietnam War that the phenomenon of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder has

---

[10] For example Geoffrey H. Hartman, *Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994); James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993);

[11] Stephan Feuchtwang, 'Reinscriptions: Commemoration, Restoration and the Interpersonal Transmission of Histories and Memories under Modern States in Asia and Europe', in *Memory and Methodology* ed. by Susannah Radstone (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 59-77 (p. 79). See also Alan S. Rosenbaum, *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide*, 2nd edn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001).

[12] Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, pp. 13-14.

[13] Tim Cole, *Images of the Holocaust: The Myth of the 'Shoah Business'* (London: Duckworth, 1999), p. 1.

[14] The most obvious example must be Steven Spielberg's hugely successful film, *Schindler's List*, as considered in Miriam Bratu Hansen, '*Schindler's List* is not *Shoah*: The Second Commandment, Popular Modernism and Public Memory', *Critical Inquiry*, 22 (1996), 292-312.

[15] Dori Laub, 'Truth and Testimony: The Process and the Struggle', in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. by Cathy Caruth (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1995), pp. 61-75 (p. 65).

[16] Ibid., p. 68.

been studied in detail.[17] Psychic trauma is generally taken to mean the response to a devastating event, distinguished by 'repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts or behaviours stemming from the event, along with numbing that may have begun during or after the experience, and possibly also increased arousal to (and avoidance of) stimuli recalling the event.'[18] The nature of trauma, then, with its insistent gaps and repetitions, makes describing and analysing its origins and effects extremely problematic. The number of natural disasters, wars, conflicts and instances of massacre, torture, and genocide that have taken place in the modern world have now lead some social scientists to speak of 'traumatized communities' in which individuals display features of common trauma while possibly being bonded together by their shared experience.[19] A pertinent example of this in the current context is the survivors' groups of ex-*desaparecidos* in Argentina.[20]

With so many conflicts occurring in recent decades, it is clear that the memory of traumatic events is both complex and deeply significant at an international level. At the same time, a pervasive anxiety regarding the role of forgetting in society is also a feature of contemporary debate. Marita Sturken notes that North American culture, for example, is often presented as one of amnesia, but reminds us that 'memory and forgetting are co-constitutive processes; each is essential to the other's existence.'[21] Huyssen, one of cultural memory's key players, has spoken of 'excess and saturation' in the field of memory, and calls for a move away from the focus on personal memory.[22] French historian Pierre Nora signals this anxiety even more clearly when he asserts, 'We speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left.'[23] Nora cites the rise of mass culture and the acceleration of history as the cause of a general tendency towards

[17] Cathy Caruth, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1995), p. 3-4.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Kai Erikson, 'Notes on Trauma and Community', in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. by Cathy Caruth (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1995), pp. 183-99 (p. 185).
[20] The Asociación de ex Detenidos Desaparecidos (Association of ex Detained-Disappeared People) have a presence on the Internet: <http://www.exdesaparecidos.org.ar> [accessed 15 September 2004].
[21] Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (London: University of California Press, 1997), p. 2.
[22] Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, p. 3.
[23] Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26 (1989), 7-24 (p.7).

amnesia. For Nora, the multiple objects or sites of commemoration which he terms *lieux de mémoire* have replaced the existence of 'true' or pure memory. Nora is not alone in his scepticism towards contemporary society, its memorializing obsession, and new technologies: Huyssen, too, sees our obsession with memory as a struggle against 'high-tech amnesia' which, he claims, may lead to 'twilight memories', defined as, 'generational memories on the wane due to the passing of time and the continuing speed of technological modernization, and memories that reflect the twilight status of memory itself.'[24] This is connected to an increase in the number of museums, memorials, and monuments, which are being built 'like there was no tomorrow'.[25] Huyssen argues that such physical entities eventually become invisible and promote forgetting. Similarly, Derrrida suggests that the archive works against its original intention and leads to forgetting.[26] Sturken, however, refutes suggestions of a collapse of memory, claiming that, 'Throughout history, the most prominent characterization of memory has been the idea that it is in crisis. Memory has been seen to be threatened by technology since ancient times.'[27] She suggests, rather, that memory is constantly renewed and re-enacted through the apparent crises.

Memory and Photography

We may ask, therefore, what connects photography and memory. The essence of photography as a trace of the real gives it a peculiar link to its subject, frozen in a past moment. Photographs are popularly considered to contain or facilitate memories and are particularly significant within the private space of the family, where rites of passage such as birthdays, weddings and holidays are commemorated in the family album. In the context of Holocaust images, Barbie Zelizer calls photographs 'vehicles of collective memory' and 'building blocks of remembering', while Sturken has noted that, 'Memory appears to reside within the photographic image, to tell its story in response to our

---

[24] Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995) p. 3.

[25] Ibid., p. 253.

[26] Jaques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. by Eric Prenowitz (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996) p. 12.

[27] Sturken, *Tangled Memories* p. 17.

gaze.'[28] This comment, however, reveals that while photographs may *appear* to be passive vessels of memory, in fact their meaning is mediated by both the medium and the spectator.

Marianne Hirsch, concerned particularly with issues of post-Holocaust memory, asks how photography mediates family memory and thus familial ideology. Photographs, with their multiple looks, are evidently deeply embedded in family ritual and thus are part of the narrative that each family constructs about itself. However their relevance extends beyond the private sphere, especially in instances of collective trauma. Hirsch uses the term *postmemory* to characterize 'the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated.'[29] Postmemory is different from memory, as the younger generation did not directly experience the events, but it may also be distinguished from history by the intensely personal nature of the remembrances. Hirsch writes specifically of the Holocaust, but believes that her ideas may usefully transfer to other experiences of mass trauma. Photographs connected to traumatic events such as the Holocaust and the Argentine 'Dirty War' certainly carry an added ideological burden and can have important influences in both the private family and the public, political sphere.

Photography's much remarked on connection to death also has important repercussions in the examination of situations such as the legacy of state terrorism. As Susan Sontag has famously remarked, 'All photographs are *memento mori*.'[30] Roland Barthes has asserted that the uniqueness of photography is partly due to its connectedness to death, its suggestion that its subject is already dead; '*that* is dead and *that* is going to die.'[31] This is doubly significant in cases such as that of Argentina where family photographs

---

[28] Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 1-2; Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (London: University of California Press, 1997), p. 19.

[29] Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997) p. 22.

[30] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1979; repr. 2002), p. 15.

[31] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, trans. by Richard Howard (London, Vintage, 2000), p. 96.

of the disappeared carry an additional weight. The Holocaust photograph, according to Hirsch, 'is uniquely able to bring out this particular capacity of photographs to hover between life and death, to capture only that which no longer exists, to suggest both the desire and the necessity and, at the same time, difficulty, the impossibility of mourning.'[32] Mourning is equally impossible in a country, such as Argentina, where victims were taken from their families with no explanation, no evidence, and no burial place. Photographs remain as the only evidence of their lives and yet as a constant reminder of their fate.

The question remains, however, of whether photographs do facilitate memory. Barthes is adamant that they do not, declaring, 'Not only is the Photograph never, in essence, a memory [...] but it actually blocks memory, quickly becomes a counter-memory.'[33] Zelizer, who, like Hirsch, is concerned with images of the Holocaust, believes that, 'we do not yet fully understand how images help us to remember, particularly in circumstances we did not experience personally.'[34] This implies that images may help us to remember in some sense, however, although Zelizer warns against the tendency to use images as general icons of an event rather than exploring their specificity. Returning to photography's mediated powers, Sturken asks, 'Does the photographic image allow the memory to come forth, or does it actually create the memory?'[35] While this question has no clear-cut answer, she highlights the role of photography in forming national narratives of key events. Sturken privileges photographs in the category of objects she calls 'technologies of memory', alongside memorials, public art, literature and activism, for their important role in rituals of collective remembrance.[36] She classes them as 'objects through which memories are shared, produced, and given meaning.'[37] There is little agreement, then, as to whether images help, hinder, or indeed create memory.

---

[32] Hirsch, p. 20.
[33] Barthes, p. 91.
[34] Zelizer, p. 2.
[35] Sturken, p. 22.
[36] Ibid., p. 10.
[37] Ibid., p. 9.

The rise of digital technology and the Internet adds another dimension to such debates. Digital imagery has profoundly changed debates on photographic referentiality and notions of photographic truth, and even belief in what constitutes an image. Communication has been transformed by email and the Internet, affecting the present, as communication is almost instantaneous, and the future of memory, as the supposed material permanence of written records loses it relevancy. This has exacerbated fears over the loss of memory in some quarters, while in others there is optimism about new developments and the supposed interactivity and democratic potential of the image-filled World Wide Web.

Memory in Latin America

In summary, then, memory discourse is concerned with the status of remembering and forgetting in our postmodern society. Certain central events such as the Holocaust also provide key points which are used to provide insights into the nature of collective memory and trauma. For the most part these discussions are centred around Europe and the United States, although many scholars assume the ability of their ideas to translate into other contexts. How relevant are these memory debates to Latin America, and Argentina specifically?

Latin America is not an area that escapes the need to critically consider its past and its memorial processes. This theme is exemplified by a growing body of work on state violence and terror, and its legacies.[38] As knowledge about this period continues to come to light, material covering the events of recent Argentine history has also been published, although this is for the most part not articulated within paradigms of memory.[39] On the whole work has been largely historical and testimonial. Issues of

---

[38] Juan E. Corradi, Patricia Weiss Fagen and Manuel Antonio Garretón, eds, *Fear at the Edge: State Terror and Resistance in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius C.G.M. Robben, *Fieldwork Under Fire: Contemporary Studies of Violence and Survival* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Luis Roniger and Mario Sznajder, *The Legacy of Human Rights Violations in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile and Uruguay* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
[39] From many examples, Martin Edwin Andersen, *Dossier Secreto: Argentina's Desaparecidos and the Myth of the "Dirty War"* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1995); Rita Arditti, *Searching for Life: The*

personal and collective memories, nevertheless, retain their importance in a nation whose government has been, until recently, consistently reluctant to confront the legacy of the 1976-83 dictatorship. Numerous human rights organizations, many comprised of survivors and relatives of victims of the regime, now insist on the necessity of remembering as one of their central tenets.

While the tens of thousands of victims of the so-called 'Dirty War' have had a profound effect on the country, comparisons with the Holocaust must be made extremely cautiously. The trials of the leaders of the military juntas have been compared with the Nüremburg trials in post-war Germany. The important difference, however, is that the Nazi trials took place in a vanquished country under the control of the Allies, while in Argentina the trials took place in a divided country under the control of the same institutions which had previously failed to maintain democratic rule and protect the people. Carina Perelli describes the Argentine legal process as 'a Nüremburg trial of sorts without denazification'.[40] Following Perelli's argument, the weakness of the truth commission investigation and the subsequent legal processes has made scapegoats of the armed forces while leaving the real problem - the institutions, complicity and acceptance of authoritarian rule - intact. Others have been dissatisfied with the long term process of democratisation and continue to call for the military leaders to be brought to justice. Nevertheless, as the 'Dirty War' constituted an undeniable instance of collective trauma, points may be usefully drawn from some work on the Holocaust.

A further aspect to consider is that of the validity of the issue of postmodernism in Latin America, for if, as the key proponents of memory studies suggest, postmodernism and memory are closely intertwined, such a linkage may not be as seamlessly relevant for

---

Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina (London: University of California Press, 1999); Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2002); Patricia Marchak, *God's Assassins: State Terrorism in Argentina in the 1970s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

[40] Carina Perelli, 'Memoria de Sangre: Fear, Hope and Disenchantment in Argentina', in *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace*, ed. by Jonathan Boyarin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994) pp. 39-66 (p. 58).

Latin America.[41] The concepts of postmodernism have been uncritically applied to the continent by some without due consideration of the very different context, and indiscriminately rejected as irrelevant by others.[42] Attempting to find a balance between these two extremes, Santiago Colás criticizes such reductive, universalizing approaches. He gives Linda Hutcheon, a major authority on postmodernism, as an example of the former 'application of site-specific theories of postmodernism to international culture without regard for the locally determined specifics of that culture'.[43] He also criticizes Fredric Jameson for his 'paradoxical' reliance on the 'Third World'. On the one hand, Jameson categorizes postmodernism as a 'cultural dominant', indicating that it is an international phenomenon. On the other, he seems to situate the Third World as somehow outside postmodernism and available as a point of comparison, contradicting his earlier theory.[44] John Beverley and José Oviedo have also noted that, 'Postmodern seems a particularly inappropriate term for nation-states and social formations that are usually thought of as not having gone through the stage of modernity [...] or, perhaps more exactly, that display an "uneven modernity"'.[45]

Colás, by contrast, takes account of the socio-economic and political context neglected by Hutcheon, and studies the particular situation of postmodernity in Argentina, remaining conscious of the dangers of generalizing. Other scholars within Latin America have also entered the postmodernism debate with an awareness of the specific issues affecting the region, including differences between Latin America countries, local cultural productions, the rise of new social movements, economic crises, the importance of religion, and the legacies of the Southern Cone dictatorships. If memory debates in the West have placed an emphasis on the link between postmodernism and the rise of memory, this approach may need rethinking in the context of Latin America.

---

[41] Important accounts of postmodernism include David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989) and Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1984)

[42] John Beverley and José Oviedo, 'Introduction', in *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, ed. by John Beverley, José Oviedo and Michael Aronna (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), pp. 1-17 (p. 2).

[43] Santiago Colás, *Postmodernity in Latin America: The Argentine Paradigm* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), p. xi.

[44] Santiago Colás, *Postmodernity in Latin America*, pp. 5-10.

[45] Beverley and Oviedo, p. 2.

Historical and Political Background: Argentina in the Twentieth Century

Owing to the specificity of Latin America, it is crucial to pay due attention to the specific context of Argentine society and its particular concerns with the memory of its past. During the military dictatorship between 1976 and 1983 it is estimated that up to 30 000 people were abducted by the security forces in Argentina.[46] These people became known as the *desaparecidos,* the 'disappeared', because they were taken from the street, their place of work or home, and for the most part, never seen again. They were not kept in legal jails or charged with any crime, no information about them was provided by the authorities and in the majority of cases, their remains have never been found.

How was it possible that the ruling powers of a country would commit such atrocities against their own people? While Argentina is not the only country to have suffered in this way, knowledge of its unique historical and cultural contexts is essential to an understanding of the events. Crucially, the military junta did not initiate military involvement in government, right-wing death squads, disappearance, imprisonment without due process or torture. All these practices had been used, albeit on a smaller scale, by previous governments. In fact, violence and state repression had become an integral part of society in a country which had once prided itself as being one of the richest and most 'Europeanized' in Latin America. This laid the foundations for the state terror which was to follow, and has impeded the creation of an accountable democracy since 1983. It is only by examining the antecedents of the dictatorship that we can fully understand the causes of state violence.

In common with other countries in Latin America, Argentina was colonized by Spain in the sixteenth century and achieved independence in the nineteenth. In the early twentieth century, Argentina seemed to have a bright future, with a growing economy and a

---

[46] It is not possible to give the exact number of *desaparecidos.* In 1984 CONADEP listed the names of 8960 disappeared, while acknowledging that there were in fact far more. The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo and other human rights organizations use the figure of 30 000, assuming that many disappearances went unreported. See Jo Fisher, *Mothers of the Disappeared* (London: Zed, 1989), p. 70.

rapidly increasing population due to European immigration. Political life was, however, largely controlled by the landowning oligarchy, and the armed forces were already involved in civilian politics. In 1930 the government of Hipólito Yrigoyen, pressured by economic difficulties and exposure of corruption, was overthrown in a military coup which was subsequently upheld by the Supreme Court, based on the belief that the armed forces could legally oust an elected government to protect life, liberty and private property, a decision which was to set a precedent for future military interventions.

In 1944, following another military coup, Juan Domingo Perón became Minister of Labour in General Edelmiro Farrell's administration and began to introduce reforms which were designed to improve the conditions of the working class. This gained him popular support, but caused anger in the armed forces and the oligarchy. However he was quickly successful: 'As the first half of 1944 passed, it became clear that Farrell himself was little more than a figurehead, that the government's most powerful figure was Farrell's aide, Colonel Juan Perón.'[47] By the time he won the Presidency with 54% of the vote in February 1946, 'Perón had forever altered Argentina's political equation'.[48] He was to become the most powerful figure in Argentine society, even during a period of exile, with an influence extending after his death.

In his first term in office Perón set about implementing a system of labour reforms which turned him into the revered leader of the *descamisados* (literally, 'shirtless ones', or workers). As James points out, it was not simply Perón's charismatic personality and rousing speeches which drew the support of the masses, but the prospect of concrete material gain.[49] At the same time as ensuring the devotion of the people, Perón was also occupied with crushing his opponents. He purged the universities and the Supreme Court of those who resisted him and introduced restrictions on press freedom. Those who did not support him were classed as 'antinational' and 'enemies of the people'.[50]

---

[47] David Rock, *Argentina 1516-1987: From Spanish Colonization to Alfonsin,* rev edn (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987) p. 252.
[48] Andersen, p. 26.
[49] James, p. 279.
[50] Lewis, p. 7, Mariano Ben Plotkin, *Mañana es San Perón: A Cultural History of Perón's Argentina,* trans. by Keith Zahniser (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2003) p. 195.

It is hardly possible to describe, however briefly, the era of Perón without mentioning the role of his second wife, Eva.[51] Evita, as she was known, greatly increased the standing and mythical status of her husband and was a vital influence in the country. She was largely concerned with charitable work through the Eva Perón Foundation and raised awareness of women's political rights, culminating in the introduction of female suffrage in 1947.[52] Due to her humble origins and populist beliefs, she was shunned by upper class women, but regarded with adoration by the working class. Evita's saintly image among the Argentine masses was consolidated by her early death from cancer in July 1952.

Perón's second term, beginning the same year, proved a stark contrast to the first. His already uneasy relations with the armed forces and the Catholic Church turned into open hostility. This, combined with economic pressures, eventually led to a military rebellion and Perón's overthrow in September 1955. Perón went into exile, but his supporters remained and he continued to influence Argentine political life from abroad. Peronism is a complex and contradictory discourse, which draws its followers from both the right and left of the political spectrum. Plotkin captures something of these contradictions when he states, 'Peronism presented itself simultaneously as a complete and revolutionary rupture with the past and as a conservative force preserving the most traditional national values'.[53]

In the decade after Perón's overthrow he and his followers were excluded from the political process, while the military retained their power with two further coups in 1962 and 1966. During this period, a Peronist resistance began to form, consisting mainly of 'radicalized sectors of predominantly middle-class youth' who became attracted to the multiple possibilities of Peronism.[54] The principal groups were the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP; People's Revolutionary Army), the Juventud Peronista

---

[51] J.M.Taylor, *Eva Perón: The Myths of a Woman* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Tomás Eloy Martínez, *Santa Evita* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1995).
[52] Rock, p. 287.
[53] Plotkin, p. 197.
[54] Ibid., p. 200.

(Peronist Youth) and the Montoneros. Although they were small organizations, they represented another pressure on the already split armed forces which caused them to seek a political solution, leading eventually to the return of Perón.

General Alejandro Lanusse paved the way for Perón's return by allowing Peronists to re-enter the political sphere. However Perón himself, in exile in Spain, was barred from standing in the elections in March 1973 on a technicality. The victor was the Peronist Héctor Cámpora, who stepped aside after just 49 days to make way for Perón's restoration. Perón's long-awaited return to Argentina on 20 June 1973 was hardly a glorious homecoming: leftists and right-wing paramilitary groups clashed at Ezeiza airport and many, perhaps hundreds, were killed. It was a violent start to an era that would continue to be marked by repression, notably by the Argentina Anticommunist Alliance (AAA or Triple A), a right-wing paramilitary group allied to the Social Welfare Ministry.[55] AAA death squads began to assassinate the left wing opposition, as Perón quickly turned against the Montoneros and the Peronist Youth. It was at this time that the definition of subversion was broadened, there was systematic use of torture in prisons and bodies appeared in the River Plate – all factors which would become trademarks of the military regime in the late 1970s.[56] Patricia Marchak maintains that 'The "Dirty War" began in 1973, under the government of Juan Perón [...] It was an escalation of the violence that had marked the whole period since the late 1960s, with the added component of right-wing terrorist groups organized by an agency of the state".[57]

General Perón died on 1 July 1974, after less than a year in power. His third wife, María Estela Martínez de Perón, known as Isabel, took over the Presidency but proved weak and incompetent. In 1975 she ordered the 'annihilation' of subversive elements, giving the AAA and armed forces powers to crush their opponents.[58] They began a policy of severe repression against the ERP in the province of Tucumán, which served as a test for

---

[55] Andersen, p. 96; Lewis, p. 90-91.
[56] Rock, p. 363-64.
[57] Marchak, p. 109.
[58] Ibid, p. 194.

the future 'Dirty War', even though the ERP was not a serious threat. Here the military co-ordinated the principal features of their repressive system: kidnapping, torture, including electric shock, and the use of clandestine detention centres.[59] The combination of sharply rising inflation rates with an escalation of violence provided, as Rock points out, 'the classic scenario for a coup d'etat'.[60]

The coup, which came on March 24 1976, was led by a military junta from the three armed forces: Lieutenant General Jorge Rafael Videla from the Army, Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera from the Navy, and Brigadier General Orlando Ramón Agosti from the Air Force. It was the sixth coup of the twentieth century, and a clear continuation of the political violence and military interference in civilian life that had plagued Argentina for so long. Nevertheless, as Arditti argues, 'This was not just one more coup; the bloodiest and most shameful period in Argentine history was about to begin'.[61]

The Argentine armed forces had long seen their role as one of paternalistic protection. They stressed the need to defend the Western and Christian values of the country and exaggerated the leftist threat, excluding dissidents from citizenship. Videla declared that 'The repression is against a minority which we do not consider Argentine.'[62] Some professions were particularly targeted, including psychologists, teachers, students and journalists, but people from all walks of life, including priests and nuns, foreign citizens, and even children, were affected.[63] Some were political activists, others were suspected of being so, others had dubious associations, while still others were taken in error, mistaken for someone else.

With such a broad mandate, political violence was soon taking place on a scale unprecedented even in a turbulent Latin American country. By September 1976, there was an average of 30 kidnappings a day.[64] These generally took place at night, in

---

[59] Andersen, p. 135.
[60] Rock, p. 366.
[61] Arditti, p. 7.
[62] Ibid., p. 8.
[63] Ibid., p. 14. See also Andersen p. 196.
[64] Feitlowitz, p. 25.

people's homes, but were sometimes conducted in the street, in broad daylight and in front of witnesses who were generally too terrified to do anything. Members of the security forces using civilian clothing and unmarked cars carried out the abductions. Victims were taken to one of 340 clandestine detention centres,[65] of which one of the most notorious was the Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada (Navy Mechanics School, known as the ESMA) in Buenos Aires, where an estimated 5 000 Argentines lost their lives.[66]

In the detention centres, prisoners were routinely and severely tortured both physically and mentally. Andersen notes that 'Torture methods used by the military were meant to produce pain, collapse, a breakdown of resistance, fear and humiliation, a strong sense of imminent death, weakness, and physical alteration.'[67] One of the principal means of torture was the *picana*, the electric cattle prod, which was used on the most sensitive parts of the body, sometimes for hours at a time. Another method, known as *submarino*, consisted of holding the victim's head under water for prolonged periods. Prisoners were generally forbidden to talk to each other and were forced to wear a hood or blindfold, keeping them in a state of total disorientation. They were frequently beaten and sometimes subjected to simulated firing squads. In some cases the camp doctor would supervise torture sessions and administer medical treatment, to prevent the prisoner from dying. Some victims were also tortured in front of their spouses, parents or children, to force them to talk. Even pregnant women did not escape such treatment, including rape and electric torture.[68] Many of these women suffered miscarriages; those who did not were generally allowed to give birth before being killed and their babies given up for adoption, often to high-ranking military families who could not have children of their own.[69]

---

[65] Andersen, p. 205.
[66] Guest, p. 36.
[67] Andersen, p. 212.
[68] The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo have documented the cases of 136 pregnant women, but believe that in reality there were many more. Arditti, p. 50.
[69] Arditti, p. 24-26.

Military personnel used the euphemism of 'transference' when referring to the killing of prisoners in the 'Dirty War'. Some victims were shot and their deaths then staged and reported as a 'battle' between the security forces and armed guerrilla groups. Some were drugged, taken in aeroplanes and dropped, still alive, into the sea, for their bodies to be washed up on the banks of the River Plate.[70] Others were buried anonymously in mass graves, of which there were over 200 in Buenos Aires Province alone.[71]

Families searching for their relatives found the usual legal means closed to them, as the authorities suggested that the missing person must have simply left the country without telling them. Lawyers and journalists were either complicit with the regime, or too frightened for their own safety to investigate. In this atmosphere of generalized terror, some brave individuals began to organize and to resist, forming human rights organizations. These included the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS, Centre for Legal and Social Studies), founded by the prominent Argentine lawyer Emilio Mignone, whose own daughter Mónica was among the disappeared. Relatives of the disappeared also began to form other groups, the most famous of which is the Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo). Similarly, the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo) was composed of women whose grandchildren were disappeared or whose daughters or daughters-in-law were pregnant at the time of their disappearance.

Resistance and political activism are ways to survive the terrible trauma that disappearance inflicts on families. A large number of abductions took place in the home, a practice which violated the private sphere, the heart of the family and a place where people feel safe.[72] Antonius Robben argues that the inability of parents to protect their children, even adult children, led to intense feelings of guilt among the surviving parents.[73] This, combined with a lack of knowledge of whether the child was dead or

---

[70] Feitlowitz, p. 52.
[71] Andersen, p. 207.
[72] Antonius C.G.M. Robben, 'The Assault on Basic Trust: Disappearance, Protest, and Reburial in Argentina', in *Cultures Under Siege: Collective Violence and Trauma*, ed. by Antonius C.G.M. Robben and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p. 74-76.
[73] Robben, p. 71.

alive, and the absence of physical remains to bury, made it very difficult to mourn. Some parents suffered pathological grief, unable to believe that their children were dead – this was encouraged both by the reappearance of a tiny number of survivors, which kept hope alive, and the denials of the governments who claimed that the children had gone to live abroad.[74] As Dr. Vicente Angel Galli, the director of mental health of the Argentine government, said,

> To presume the death of people you have not seen dead, without knowing the conditions of their death, implies that one has to kill them oneself. I believe that is one of the more subtle and complex mechanisms of torture for the relatives and for all the members of the community...To accept their deaths we have to kill them ourselves.[75]

The subsequent discovery of mass graves has caused further pain for the families of the missing, who must decide whether to accept their children's death or continue fighting for their safe return. Most of the Madres, under the leadership of Hebe de Bonafini, oppose any type of concession, in which they include exhumations, memorials and compensation, and many have adopted the radical political stance of their children. Bonafini has stated; 'They've tried to convert us into the mothers of dead children and put an end to the problem of the *desaparecidos*. We will never accept they are dead until those responsible are punished.'[76]

Although there were disappearances throughout the military dictatorship, the vast majority of these took place in the early years, 1976-79, while in the 1980s the violence lessened somewhat.[77] Videla was replaced as President in 1981 by General Roberto Viola, who was himself replaced in the same year by General Leopoldo Galtieri. The junta was subjected to increasing international pressure from organisations such as the United Nations and Amnesty International, and internal pressure from human rights organizations and relatives of the disappeared.

In a desperate attempt to distract attention from the dismal economic situation and rally the people in patriotic union, in April1982 the military government invaded the Islas

---

[74] Robben, p. 87.
[75] Arditti, p. 15.
[76] Fisher, p. 158.
[77] Feitlowitz, p. 8.

Malvinas (Falklands Islands) which Argentina had long claimed as its own. Galtieri apparently believed that the British would not defend the islands and that the U.S. would side with Argentina.[78] He was wrong on both counts and the Argentine armed forces were quickly defeated. The military force that had terrorized its own population for so long had been shown to be incompetent, and it suffered a massive loss of prestige. Utterly lacking in credibility, the junta shortly afterwards lifted the ban on political parties and the country began moving towards democratic elections. Feitlowitz judges that the regime's downfall was 'not because of its record on human rights. Rather, it crumbled under the weight of its own corruption, economic mismanagement, and military mismanagement'.[79]

Elections were held in October 1983 and Radical candidate Raúl Alfonsín won the Presidency and began the difficult process of redemocratization. He immediately set up a Comisión Nacional sobre la desaparición de personas (National Commission on the Disappeared), known as CONADEP, led by prominent Argentine author Ernesto Sábato. A year later the Commission published its report, *Nunca Más* (Never Again), which documented 8 960 disappearances and the repressive tactics of the armed forces.

In 1985 the nine Generals who had led the three successive military juntas from 1976 to 1983 were tried in civil court. They were for the most part defiant and justified their orders on the basis that they were necessary against the guerrilla threat. Massera, for example, declared that, 'I did not come here to defend myself. No one must defend himself for having won a just war. And the war against terrorism was a just war'.[80] The prosecution, however, argued that, 'Either there was no war and we find ourselves faced with acts of common criminality, or there was a war, in which case we are faced with war crimes'.[81] Another excuse put forward was that of military 'excesses' by some individuals acting without the co-ordination and approval of the State. This is dismissed by Arditti, who points out that the violence was systematic, following a 'methodology of

---

[78] Andersen, p. 300.

[79] Feitlowitz, p. 12.

[80] quoted in Roniger and Sznajder, p. 60.

[81] quoted in Guest, p. 388.

terror' and carried out by Task Forces staffed by the different branches of the armed forces.[82] In the end, five of the generals were found guilty, but their sentences were lenient, with only Videla and Massera sentenced to life imprisonment. Human rights organizations were disappointed, while the convictions caused the armed forces to threaten rebellion for the opposite reason.

For the rest of his term in office Alfonsín struggled to maintain the uneasy balance between the different sides of the debate surrounding the 'Dirty War'. Threatened by military uprisings, he introduced a law known as *Punto Final* (Full Stop) in December 1986, which set a deadline of 60 days to initiate legal proceedings against other military personnel. Human rights organizations worked frantically to beat the deadline. In June 1987 a *Ley de Obediencia Debida* (Due Obedience) granted immunity to most of the military on the basis that they had been following orders. Only rape, theft, and the illegal abduction of children were excluded, and perpetrators of these crimes could therefore still be prosecuted.

His successor, Peronist Carlos Menem, went even further by issuing a general pardon to all those convicted of crimes during the 'Dirty War'. The members of the juntas were released. Menem attempted to initiate a policy of reconciliation and concern for the future. Many felt, however, that the country was not yet ready to move on when it had not fully examined the period of the 'Dirty War', and those responsible for the atrocities had not received justice. Deep concern remains about the culture of impunity in Argentina, as well as the lingering pockets of authoritarianism. Roniger and Sznajder characterize the legacy of human rights violations in the Southern Cone as 'a long-term open wound in the bosom of these societies'[83] which has still not healed, and organizations such as the Madres and Abuelas of the Plaza de Mayo continue to be a thorn in the side of any regime that tries to promote forgetting of the 'Dirty War'. The

---

[82] Arditti, p. 16.
[83] Roniger and Sznajder, p. 49.

relatives' organizations have seen their role shift from offering mutual comfort and support, to calling for truth, justice and remembrance of the victims.[84]

Summary of Contents

Far from fading into the background, more than two decades after the return to democracy, the legacy of state terror is still having profound and divisive effects on Argentine society, and, with the rise of new media, photographs are circulating as never before. In fact, this should not surprise us, for as the case of the Holocaust has demonstrated, traumatic events are often re-examined after a period of latency.[85] The first democratic administration after the dictatorship, beginning under the Presidency of Raúl Alfsonsin in 1983, was elected on the basis of its promises to investigate the military atrocities of the previous years. After several fruitful years, however, with the *Nunca Más* report and the trials of the juntas as their highlights, dealing with the aftermath of authoritarianism became less of a priority. It is only recently, with the enthusiasm of current President Néstor Kirchner, who has shown a commitment to improving the human rights situation of the country, the rescinding of laws prohibiting the prosecution of 'Dirty War' criminals, and the activism of the now adult children of the disappeared, that the effects of this difficult era have been given renewed attention. This period has now generated a substantial critical literature, as mentioned above, some of which draws on cultural memory. Some examples are Catherine Grant, who has analysed photographic images in documentary films about state terrorism, Nelly Richard, who works on images of disappeared people in the Chilean context, and Diana Taylor.[86] Of these, my thesis draws in particular on the work of Taylor, who has

---

[84] Elizabeth Jelin, 'The Politics of Memory: The Human Rights Movement and the Construction of Democracy in Argentina', *Latin American Perspectives* 21 (1994), 38-58

[85] Andreas Huyssen, 'The Mnemonic Art of Marcelo Brodsky', in *Nexo* (Buenos Aires: La Marca Fotografía, 2001).

[86] Elizabeth Jelin, *State Repression and the Struggles for Memory*, trans. by Judy Rein and Larcial Goday-Anativia (London: Latin American Bureau, 2003); Adriana J. Bergero, Fernando O. Reati, and Andrés Avellaneda, eds, *Memoria colectiva y políticas de olvido: Argentina y Uruguay 1970-1990* (Rosario, Argentina: Viterbo, 1997).

examined the 'Dirty War' in the light of the performative qualities and self-presentation of its protagonists, the military and the Madres de Plaza de Mayo.[87]

Argentina is, of course, not alone in dealing with such concerns. Other countries in Latin America, including Peru and Chile, are also continuing to face the consequences of their pasts. Internationally, a range of conflicts are having lasting repercussions, and there is widespread academic interest in issues of memory in such contexts. And yet, with a few exceptions that I will comment on in the chapters that follow, the place of photography in such discourses has been thus far neglected.[88] While photographs frequently appear as useful and widely circulated illustrations, there is still scope to study them far more closely than has previously been the case.

The first chapter of this thesis deals with images of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, who have become involved with the mobilization of images in the public sphere. They have made use of photographs of their disappeared children in their weekly protests in the Plaza de Mayo and in the larger, occasional marches they organize. The sight of aging Madres, their heads covered with white scarves and carrying images of their children, as well as their most famous slogan, 'Aparición con vida' (Let them appear alive), has become familiar both nationally and internationally. Images have long been a central focus of their public personae and an important signal of the purpose of their struggle, but these have rarely been fully analysed. I will argue that over time the principle characteristic of the images has shifted from that of indexicality, a trace of the referent, to iconicity, standing in for all the victims rather than the particular one shown. Thus although images of the disappeared continue to be significant in the work of human rights organizations like the Madres, their meaning is not fixed and continues to develop.

---

[87] Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); 'Performing Gender: Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo', in *Negotiating Performance: Gender, Sexuality, and Theatricality in Latin/o America*, ed. by Diana Taylor and Juan Villegas (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 275-305.

[88] Catherine Grant, 'Still Moving Images: Photographs of the Disappeared in Films about the "Dirty War" in Argentina', in *Phototextualities: Intersections of Photography and Narrative*, ed. by Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), pp. 63-86; Nelly Richard, 'Imagen-recuerdo y borraduras', in *Políticas y estéticas de la memoria* (Santiago, Chile: Cuarto Propio, 2000), pp. 77-84.

Crucially, images of the Madres and of the disappeared now circulate in new contexts. In the second chapter I will examine photographs of disappeared persons which are now published in digital form on the Internet and form part of online memorials to the victims of state terrorism. New audiences are therefore opened up to such images, which maintain their relevancy in the twenty-first century and are invested with interactive potential. I will focus on two web sites to explore this phenomenon, while returning to the question of whether such uses of the images are realistic in their stated aim of remembering the victims.

Finally, I will turn from photographic images of the disappeared to those of the perpetrators, the military figures who formed part of the regime of repression in Argentina. I will ask what has become of those servicemen and junta leaders who have, for the most part, escaped justice under democratic rule. One of the web sites considered earlier also contains images of and information about the torturers who operated during the dictatorship. Both during and after the 'Dirty War', large sectors of the Argentine judiciary, political sphere and population as a whole turned away from the reality of dictatorial atrocities. This result of fear and complicity was a factor in the continuing aspects of authoritarianism which were not fully removed in the process of redemocratization. Recently, however, there have been attempts to look again at Argentine perpetrators, both in the course of legal processes following the repeal of laws preventing the prosecution of most torturers, and by human rights activists. Some organizations have organised both local and virtual demonstrations exposing the presence of perpetrators in the community. Making visible the presence of criminals, and publicizing their crimes, is an explicit challenge to those who advocate forgetting as a means to move forward, and a step towards justice for the disappeared.

The Madres de Plaza de Mayo and Images of the Disappeared

During the 1976-1983 dictatorship a climate of fear was created in Argentina which meant that most civilians tried to live unobtrusively and avoid any unwelcome attention. Yet despite their terror, some who were directly affected by the repressive policies of the regime, in particular relatives of those abducted by the security forces, began to form groups of resistance. Mothers of disappeared persons became the most prominent of these new activists, and carried out regular, dangerous demonstrations against the injustice of their children's disappearance. They began to carry photographs of their abducted children during marches and protests. They enlarged images and carried them on placards, laminated them and pinned them to their clothes, or held posters, turning themselves into 'walking billboards'.[1] Such images, and the sight of women carrying them, both in demonstrations and pictured in the media, have since become symbols of the human rights struggles in Argentina above all, but also further afield. This simple gesture, frequently reproduced in many different contexts and instantly recognizable, has become a potent symbol of the struggle of ordinary people against authoritarian or unresponsive governments. These are images held up to be looked at, a call to remember and to act, and their continuing presence in the public domain highlights the persistent need to explain the fate of their subjects. This was forcefully underlined in a recent news report concerning a man called Daniel Tarnopolsky, who has won compensation from the former head of the Navy, Emilio Massera, for the killing of his parents and siblings during the 'Dirty War'.[2] The article in *Clarín* newspaper was illustrated with an image of Tarnopolsky in the act of donating his compensation payment to the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo). He is holding up photographs of his parents, watched by Estela Carlotto, the President of the Abuelas. This duty has now, in cases such as this one, been passed from parents and grandparents to the now adult children of the disappeared. We might ask where the effectiveness of such photographs stems from, and why they continue to be repeated in the twenty-first century.

---

[1] Diana Taylor, 'Performing Gender: Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo', in *Negotiating Performance: Gender, Sexuality and Theatricality in Latin/o America*, ed. by Diana Taylor and Juan Villegas (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 275-305 (p. 287).

[2] Lucio Fernández Moores, 'Massera indemnizó al hijo de un desaparecido y salvó su casa', *Clarín*, 24 August 2004, <http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/08/24/elpais/p-01401.htm> [accessed 8 September 2004].

Notwithstanding the significance of these images, illustration remains the primary role for photographs in most texts concerning the period of state terrorism and redemocratization. The use of images in human rights demonstrations has been frequently mentioned by commentators, but rarely has sustained analysis of said images been made.[3] For example, Diana Taylor has written an illuminating account of the gendered and performative aspects of Argentina's 'Dirty War', including the work of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of Plaza de Mayo) and their use of photographs, placards and posters in their protests.[4] However, as Catherine Grant rightly points out in her analysis of photographs of the disappeared in documentary film, Taylor does not focus on the photographs themselves, as objects, preferring to rely chiefly on witness testimony and adding photographs merely as useful illustrations.[5] Many other texts contain photographs with little or no comment on them, beyond a brief caption.[6] That photographs remain uncommented upon is perhaps most poignantly exemplified in the *Historia de las Madres de Plaza de Mayo* (History of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo) published by the Madres' organization itself, which concludes with a long section of photographs, arranged by year and showing the Madres' activities over a period of more than two decades. The length of the section – over one hundred pages – is enough to indicate its importance, but its presence is not remarked on at all in the rest of the text.[7]

Of the few exceptions to the general tendency to elide discussion of photography's presence, Catherine Grant, as mentioned above, considers the importance of still photography from the perspective of film studies. Grant circumvents the customary opposition of film and photography to consider the frequently unacknowledged

---

[3] See for example Margeurite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[4] Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

[5] Catherine Grant, 'Still Moving Images: Photographs of the Disappeared in Films about the "Dirty War" in Argentina', in *Phototextualities: Intersections of Photography and Narrative*, ed. by Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), pp. 63-86 (p. 69).

[6] See for example Rita Arditti, *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina* (London: University of California Press, 1999).

[7] Vazquez, Inés, ed., *Historia de las Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, 2nd edn, (Buenos Aires, Ediciones Madres de Plaza de Mayo, 2003).

importance of photographs on screen. She examines the repeated occurrence of portraits of the disappeared in documentaries about the dictatorship and their continued ability to move us emotionally, tracing the indexical and iconic values of the images. In another context, Nelly Richard has explored the use of visual artefacts in relatives' demonstrations and cultural productions in Chile, both during and after the Pinochet dictatorship. Richard focuses on the type of photographs used, their relation to memory discourse and changing meanings, in a way that has otherwise been distinctly lacking in the field.[8]

If photographs have, on one level, taken centre stage in the human rights arena, why do they remain ignored by most commentators? Although it is difficult to answer this question with any certainty, nevertheless this neglect may be connected to the very nature of photography as a medium of representation and its tendency to be taken at face value. Photography's essence as a trace of the real leads to a belief that it is a transparent window onto the past or a simple connection to a frozen moment. As Susan Sontag has famously remarked, 'Photographed images do not seem to be statements about the world so much as pieces of it, miniatures of reality that anyone can make or acquire.'[9] At the same time, the frequency with which some of these images appear in the public domain precludes close analysis of them, as their familiarity makes them unremarkable. This is one of the complicating factors of the growing iconicity of pictures of the disappeared and Madres. Will their persistent presence eventually lead to the attenuation of their power?[10] Given their lasting prominence, now is the time to foreground these images and consider fully their important role in the representation of the Madres and how this has developed in the legacy of the dictatorial period. Why are photographs seen but not analysed? How might we offer an analysis of them? How, moreover, do they engage with the process of remembering?

---

[8] Nelly Richard, 'Imagen-recuerdo y borraduras', in *Políticas y estéticas de la memoria* (Santiago: Cuarto Propio, 2000), pp. 165-72.
[9] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1979; repr. 2002), p. 4.
[10] Grant, p. 83.

The photographs which form the basis of this chapter, which feature the Madres and images of their children, reveal their status in the public eye. The photographs discussed here are included on a CD-ROM produced by the Madres de Plaza de Mayo which features the most striking images of them; however, they, or very similar photographs, may also be found in many other contexts. The Madres themselves had clear reasons for displaying images of their offspring, although these reasons have shifted in the twenty-seven years of their organization's existence. The symbolic value of the images themselves remains hard to pin down and the potential for further adjustments in the future may certainly not be ruled out. In addition, spectators have also played an important role during and in the aftermath of the dictatorship, as both sides of the debate over the events of the 'Dirty War' seek their support and evidence as witnesses.[11] This chapter will compare the use of photographs in the early years of the Madres' struggle, when the primary emphasis was on the individual subjects, with later images taken during the period of tentative democracy, when a greater stress was laid on the collective message of the images. It will explore the significance of watching, looking away, and witnessing that seems so crucial in the process of working through Argentina's past.

The Madres de Plaza de Mayo and their protests during the 'Dirty War'

A considerable body of literature now exists on the Madres' movement, their origins, concerns and practices. The voices of the Madres can be heard both in their own publications and, in English, in the work of Jo Fisher, who details their struggle in their own words in the context of recent Argentine history and since redemocratization.[12] The group was formed when relatives of disappeared persons started to make inquiries at courts, police stations, army barracks, prisons and the like, and gradually began to recognize each other. In April 1977 the first group of fourteen mothers gathered in the Plaza de Mayo, the main square in Buenos Aires and the heart of Argentine civic life, to

---

[11] Antonius Robben, 'The Fear of Indifference: Combatants' Anxieties about the Political Identity of Civilians during Argentina's Dirty War', in *The Legacy of Civil War, Violence and Terror*, ed. by Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt (London: Zed, 1999), pp. 125-40 (p. 126).

[12] Jo Fisher, *Mothers of the Disappeared* (London: Zed, 1989). See also Marguerite Bouvard Guzmán, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994).

draw attention to their plight. At first they met on a Saturday morning, but realizing that the square, in the centre of Buenos Aires' banking and business district, was almost deserted at that time, in future they demonstrated on Thursday afternoons. The group, comprised mostly of housewives with little or no experience of political activism, grew rapidly and began to organize into an important form of resistance to the military government.

By 1981, the military junta was entering its sixth year of rule, and its grip was weakening, hindered by an unstable economy. In this year the Madres' first *Marcha de la resistencia* (March of Resistance) was held and photographed. In preceding years the armed forces had abducted and imprisoned thousands of citizens, most of whom were never seen again, while the media was effectively silenced by censorship and self-censorship. Meanwhile, on Thursdays, Mothers of the disappeared marched around the Plaza de Mayo, demanding news of their children. Their customary white headscarves, first used as a means of identifying each other in a crowd, had already become an established and instantly recognizable symbol of a politicized notion of motherhood. The Madres realized the importance of attracting international attention to their plight, and foreign journalists and television crews were vital to this aim. Thus, despite the obvious dangers, the Madres were never camera-shy. In fact, as Taylor argues, spectacle or performance became a central part of their existence.[13]

The first *Marcha de la resistencia* was partly staged for the cameras, and images of it now form part of the history of the Madres, and are included on the CD-ROM which they have produced about themselves. The image examined here (figure 1) is emblematic of the way in which photographs of women with pictures of their children have become significant in the human rights struggle and debate over memory of the dirty war in Argentina. This image shows the first occasion on which the Madres used placards bearing the faces of their children. In it, a group of apparently middle-class women are marching, holding up placards with large faces on them, accompanied by names and dates. The pictures are close-ups of young men, most with jacket and tie. The

---

[13] Taylor, *Disappearing Acts*, pp. 184-85.

women wear white headscarves and are, for the most part, smartly dressed. Their faces are serious. One of them, wearing a suit and with her handbag over her arm, looks straight at the camera. In the background, a man watches from an upstairs window. It is hard to tell what time of year or day it is, or the exact location.

Figure 1.

The most striking thing about this image is the use of the placards. Greatly enlarged, the faces of the disappeared are bigger than those of their relatives, and placed higher in the frame. The viewer who spends more than a few seconds looking at the image naturally tries to read the names and dates on the posters. The dates are not, as might be assumed before reading them and comparing with the features above them, dates of birth. They are the dates of disappearance, dates which will continue to be used in future years, as in most cases a concrete date of death will never be established. As well as containing text, this is also a photograph of photographs, giving it a self-referential quality. It displays an

awareness of the photographic, showing that the Madres recognized the importance of images of their children in making their absence known, and also the value of recording the whole situation, for both contemporary and future spectators.

Many of these are enlarged versions of photographs taken for passports and identity cards. Although family and group portraits were sometimes displayed, it was the identity card photographs that were primarily deployed on these large placards. Clearly they are used principally because they show a close-up of the subject's face, making them immediately recognizable; after all, the images were made for purposes of identification. There are no other people in shot as would often be the case with family photographs. At the same time, they are faces standardized by legal and civil processes, at once individual and collective. These images are also divorced from the context of the individual's everyday life and relationships.

John Tagg has considered the use of photography in the state's ideology of power. Tagg's Foucauldian study reminds us that society is controlled not only by explicitly repressive apparatuses such as the police, armed forces and government, but also by 'Ideological State Apparatuses' – the educational, religious and cultural structures which more subtly reproduce networks of power.[14] Central to the holding of power is the formation of knowledge. As Tagg explains, in the eighteenth century, the new institution of an organized police force categorized and controlled its population by means of the gathering of knowledge. Photography became a key element in 'this spreading network of power'.[15] Citizens, particularly supposed criminals, could be photographed in standardized poses for purposes of identification and control. Tagg characterizes this process as 'the body made object; divided and studied; [...] made docile and forced to yield up its truth; separated and individuated; subjected and made subject.'[16]

---

[14] Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes towards an investigation', in *Essays on Ideology*, trans. by Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 1984), pp. 1-60.
[15] John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation* (London: Macmillan, 1988) p. 74.
[16] Ibid., p. 76.

In the case of Argentina the armed forces monitored society explicitly, with laws, street patrols, banning of organizations and political parties, and censorship rules. A pervasive climate of fear also encouraged self-censorship, as people disposed of books that they feared could be seen as 'subversive', and even lost touch with friends and relatives whose association could be seen as dubious. The disappearance and torture of persons was an extreme example of the control of the body by the state. No one would leave the house without his or her identity documents. Each member of society was thus recorded and photographed.

There is therefore a particular irony in the use of such official images produced for a state which later killed its own subjects and denied their existence. Identity cards form an important part of the apparatus of state control. Yet documents such as identity cards were of little use when their owners had disappeared, were not held in legal jails, had not been officially charged with any crime, and writs of habeas corpus were ignored. As Richard points out, with reference to the Chilean context,

> Los rostros de detenidos-desaparecidos que comparecen en las fotos carné que hoy exhiben sus familiares en insignias y pancartas, llevan impresos estos sometimientos fotográficos y corporales al dispositivo del control social que, después de identificarlos y vigilarlos, se dedicó a borrar toda marca de identificación para que la violencia no dejara rastro de ejecución material ni huella de autoría.[17]

> (The faces of the detained-disappeared people who appear in the identity card photos now displayed on badges and placards by their families, reveal their photographic and physical submission to that mechanism of social control which, after identifying and watching over them, dedicated itself to erasing every means of identification, so that the violence left no trace of its carrying out or sign of who was responsible.)

On one level, the use of images in the Madres' work seems very simple: they took the images because they were all they had. Without their real children in the home or within reach, they brought images of them to prove that they *had* been there. The Madres carried photographs of their children to proclaim their existence, something which had been thrown into doubt by their disappearance and the refusal of the authorities to give any further information about them. The combination of image and text, and

---

[17] Richard, 'Imagen-recuerdo y borraduras', p. 167.

proliferation of images, reinforce the evidentiary nature of the photograph. The name and image also state the individuality of each person displayed. At this stage, although the Madres found support with each other, each was principally concerned to discover the whereabouts of her own child, and carried a picture of that person, in contrast to a later tendency for the photographs to be used more iconically, as emblems of the more generalized phenomenon of disappearance.

Yet it is also clear that these placards were part of a complex theatrical campaign waged by the Madres against the military regime, with its strict forms of control and surveillance. The *Marchas de la resistencia*, of which this was only the first, were carefully staged annual protests that lasted a full twenty-four hours and became, in the words of Marguerite Guzmán Bouvard, 'an established drama', designed to be seen by as many as possible.[18] As the name suggests they were a clear act of defiance towards the junta. So, who was the intended audience? It seems ironic that the Madres would attempt to attract the attention of the dangerous authority figures who had already targeted their families. Yet they did challenge the government's reign of terror and secrecy. By the time this image was made, it is true that the control of the junta on the country was not as strong as it had been in the late 1970s, and besides, many of the Madres were beyond fear.[19] Moreover, they sought to remain in the international spotlight, and the scrutiny of the world's media afforded them some protection.

While human rights activists were keen for organizations and governments abroad to appreciate their plight, they also looked for recognition, sympathy, and support from the Argentine population. But this was a real challenge, considering the tightly controlled media coverage, public criticism directed at the Madres by the military government, and a generalized tendency to ignore potentially controversial or dangerous events. Civilians felt themselves under a constant, threatening surveillance. Guzmán Bouvard notes that even after the dictatorship, the pervasive fear in the country extended to a reluctance to view protests like those of the Madres, so that 'people closed their windows or turned

---

[18] Guzmán Bouvard, p. 231.
[19] Arditti, p. 82.

away as the Mothers passed by.'[20] This trend must have manifested itself even more strongly in 1981, during the dictatorship, when this photograph was taken.

Although many people did not wish to look, they were drawn into the role of spectator and thus into participating in the Madres' own act of familial looking. Marianne Hirsch has focused on 'the "familial looks" that both create and consolidate the familial relations among the individuals involved.'[21] According to Hirsch, the mutual recognition that this entails plays a crucial role in the construction of family relationships. Photographs, with their exchange of looks, are therefore significant in the private sphere of home and family. As Hirsch asserts, 'Photographs, as the only material trace of an irrecoverable past, derive their power and their important cultural role from their embeddedness in the fundamental rites of family life.'[22] In Argentina, photographs were literally the only trace of the missing and were thus doubly meaningful. The Madres took both family photographs and photographs created for purposes of bureaucracy and identification in the public sphere, and used them to remember their children. These images, which were so important in the family, were then taken into the public sphere in an act of resistance. The Madres, as their chosen collective name suggests, stressed their identity as mothers above all and established it in opposition to the paternalistic gaze of the military. Women in dictatorship Argentina were not expected to appear prominently in the public sphere, but the Madres used their own status as mothers and centres of the family to make their case to the world. The Madres did receive a limited amount of critical coverage in the national press, and their marches took place quite deliberately in the Plaza de Mayo, where there would be numerous passers-by. Their protests implicate all spectators in their declaration of personal loss, which is also a political statement with repercussions in the public sphere. In common with other human rights organizations, they still seek to win over public opinion and to highlight the failings of those in

---

[20] Guzmán Bouvard, p. 210.

[21] Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 2.

[22] Ibid., p. 5.

positions of power, and thus force the authorities to action, in a method known in human rights discourse as 'the mobilization of shame'.[23]

It is interesting, then, that at the top of the image considered here there is a small figure watching the protest out of an upper storey window. While the camera is on the same level as the marchers, the man in the window is watching from a distant, superior viewpoint and may be easily overlooked. Who is this person? Is he a supporter or an opponent of the Mothers and their cause? Is he simply one of the millions of Argentines who, at least in 1981, were not marching in the Plaza de Mayo, and were passive onlookers, if they were onlookers at all? He is an incidental detail in the image, but his presence emblematizes the dilemma of looking or looking away that faced the Argentine population at that time. Taylor reminds us that 'the general public's reaction was somewhat analogous to covering one's eyes during the terrifying parts of a horror show' – an apt metaphor for a country that became adept at, literally, not seeing what was going on.[24]

There are several layers of witnessing involved in such acts of protest. Contemporary with the image, we can identify that of the Madres themselves, the spectators such as the man at the window, the photographer and the military surveillance. More distantly, there are the continuing viewers of these images. With this is mind, then, it is not surprising that such images have lasting relevance in Argentina. As part of the Madres' visual history, they are a reminder to those who remember the events they depict; those who were present but, for whatever reason, did not see what was happening; and for those who come after. This image is reproduced as part of a CD-ROM by the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, the main group of Mothers of the disappeared since the return to democracy. This context, making use of new technology, is one which could not have been imagined by the Madres and other consumers of the original photograph. Now the black and white image has been scanned, digitalized, may be easily copied, sent by email, published on the internet, and even easily manipulated.[25] The CD-ROM contains

---

[23] Thomas Keenan, 'Mobilizing Shame', *The South Atlantic Quarterly,* 103 (2004), 435-49 (435).
[24] Diana Taylor, 'Performing Gender', p. 285.
[25] The issue of digital image culture will be dealt with more fully in Chapter 2.

over one hundred images, along with written texts, documenting the Madres' history. In a society in which the ruling military once imposed an official version of events, there is now space for competing voices to emerge. The media and the human rights organizations, in their different ways, draw and document Argentina's recent history. Images like this one have become iconic and instantly recognizable, insistently repeated in many different contexts from art galleries to newspapers and the internet. It must be said that it is the white headscarf, the symbol of the Madres, that most clearly indicates their presence to Argentine citizens and others across the world who have taken an interest in human rights. This is due in large part to their habit of always wearing the headscarves at public gatherings, when they are likely to be photographed or filmed. In addition, their use of photographs of their children has also become familiar and frequently documented, although, as mentioned above, rarely analysed.

The action, and the image, of the Madres carrying large photographs of their children remains with the viewer as a curiously appropriate statement. The disappeared in image form have proliferated in Argentina and internationally in the new electronic media. Nelly Richard reminds us that photography's sinister and much remarked on connection with death and ghosts is stronger than ever in the case of photographs of the disappeared. The images show us that the missing *were there* and *are not now*, they remain suspended between life and death, 'disappeared'.[26] And yet, their reappearance in campaigns, books, newspapers, archives, websites and CD-ROMs means that they are not forgotten, that they remain in some sense, as the Madres would say, 'presente'; *there.*

Use of Images in the Campaigns of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo since the return to democracy

It is now more than two decades since the return to democracy in Argentina in 1983, and the Madres continue to exist and march around the Plaza de Mayo every Thursday. Over the years a firm routine has been established and the Plaza de Mayo itself, situated in the heart of Buenos Aires and in front of the *Casa Rosada*, (the Pink House, the Argentine

---

[26] Richard, 'Imagen-recuerdo y borraduras', p. 166.

Presidential Palace) has become strongly associated with the Madres. It even has a circle of white headscarves painted permanently on the ground where the Madres march, so there is an ever-present reminder of them. While their appearance and central demands have changed little since their foundation under the military regime, many developments have taken place, both in their organization and in the country in general. The significance of photography in the Madres' protests, which began in 1981, has also shifted. This change has been characterized as a move from indexicality, stressing the individuality of the victims, to iconicity, using images to represent all victims.[27]

This shift is also connected to the fact that, in 1986, internal differences caused a split in the group, which subsequently formed the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Association of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo), led by Hebe de Bonafini, and the Madres de Plaza de Mayo – Línea Fundadora (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo – Founding Line), led by Renee Epelbaum.[28] Línea Fundadora aims to work more pragmatically within the political system. Bonafini's group, which is the larger organization, adheres to the symbolic call for 'aparición con vida', demanding that their children be returned alive. They have moved to a politicized notion of motherhood, and in accordance with this tendency, claim *all* the disappeared as their children.

Many Madres have, therefore, moved to a more symbolic use of information about their children. Instead of embroidering the names of their children on their headscarves, they sew the name of their organization, Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, emphasizing their unity. The President of the group, Hebe Bonafini, explains further,

> First we embroidered the names of our children on [the headscarves] and hung a photo round our necks. But one day we tried to do something more revolutionary and each person picked up any photo. That was an important step, which not all the Mothers could take – it's not easy. In 1990 we stopped carrying the photos altogether. It was a contradiction. We said we were looking for all the missing

---

[27] Taylor, 'Performing Gender', p. 289; Grant, p. 69.

[28] Reference to 'Madres' and 'Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo' refer to the Madres in their entirety before 1986, and to the *Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo,* led by Hebe Bonafini, after 1986, unless otherwise specified.

children, yet we were carrying a photo of our own sons or daughters on our chest.[29]

The Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo under her leadership was, thus, beginning to reject the use of personal artefacts and reminders in public demonstrations. The Línea Fundadora Madres, by contrast, continue to embroider names on their headscarves and hang images round their necks.

Figure 2.

A number of these developments may be traced in the images *Jueves en la Plaza* (Thursday in the Square) *(1)* and *(2)*, despite their superficial similarity to the 1981 images. They show one of the last instances in which the Asociación Madres marched holding photographs of their children. *Jueves en la Plaza (1)* (figure 2) contains a considerable amount of background space which is recognizably the Plaza de Mayo, with the columns of the cathedral visible in the right hand corner, and several skyscrapers of the Buenos Aires banking district behind. On the ground the painted white headscarves can be seen. These permanent symbols of the Madres in the square

---

[29] Quoted in Jo Fisher, *Out of the Shadows: Women, Resistance and Politics in South America* (London: Latin America Bureau, 1998), p. 136.

were painted while the military tried to force the Madres from the Plaza de Mayo, so that their presence would still be unforgettable even if they could not physically march in their customary circle.[30]

Figure 3.

The most striking feature of *Jueves en la Plaza (2)* (figure 3) is the back of the policeman in the extreme foreground. He is instantly recognizable as an authority figure by his uniform and his stance in front of the women, blocking them from view. His presence is still a threat, reminding us that democracy was not the end of danger for human rights groups, which continued to face intimidation and repression.

While the Madres were considering their use of photographs and their wider aims at the beginning of the 1990s, however, it seems that less attention was being paid to them than was previously the case. These photographs were taken at a time when the initial shock and horror in Argentine society at finding out about the atrocities committed during the period of state terrorism had worn off. The Madres had been marching for over a decade and were no longer newsworthy. Their purpose had altered, from the original aims of providing comfort and solidarity to victims and relatives, to the promotion of memory,

---

[30] Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts,* p. 199.

truth and justice.[31] But this was at a time when President Menem was encouraging the country to move on and leave the past behind, and relatives of the disappeared were an unwelcome reminder of recent history.[32] Therefore, although the Madres' determination was undiminished, the wider society largely ignored them. Martín Abregú asserts that,

> By the early 1990s, the human rights movement seemed defeated. With hyperinflation ravaging the country, few were interested in punishing the guilty for the crimes of the dictatorship, or in police violence, or prison conditions.[...] ours was an incomplete democracy in which institutionalized violence remained a serious problem and vast sectors of the population remained vulnerable to abuses by the state.[33]

The culture of fear that was so pervasive in the late 1970s and early 1980s had been replaced by a culture of impunity, although common to both was the need to look away from human rights abuses and the evidence of them. The Madres had become an isolated and resented group.[34] Taylor confirms that by 1990, the flow of cultural productions dealing with the dictatorship had slowed and 'forgetting had become official policy, much against the wishes of certain groups that had vowed never to forget.'[35] In the 1981 photograph an observer stands at an upstairs window. Where is the onlooker in these photographs? Many people had chosen to forget the Madres, and even though official censorship had been removed, it was only the police that filmed them, not the media.[36] The only outsider is the dark figure of the watching policeman.

Although general interest in activists such as the Madres seemed to wane in the 1990s, they did not cease their campaigns, and against expectations have resumed their position in the public eye. To explore this further development, I turn to another image of a *Marcha de la resistencia*, this time made in 2000 (figure 4). This image is clearly distinguished as being from a more recent march as it is in colour. Although colour photography has been easily available for decades, the vast majority of the photographs

---

[31] Elizabeth Jelin, 'The Politics of Memory: The Human Rights Movement and the Construction of Democracy in Argentina', *Latin American Perspectives*, 21 (1994), 38-58.

[32] Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts*, pp. 15-16.

[33] Martín Abregú, 'Human Rights after the Dictatorship: Lessons from Argentina', *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 1, 2000, 12-18 (13).

[34] Iain Guest, *Behind the Disappearances: Argentina's Dirty War against Human Rights and the United Nations* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990) pp. 403-407.

[35] Taylor, *Disappearing Acts*, p. 13.

[36] Fisher, p. 144.

of the dictatorship and human rights groups from the 1970s and 1980s are in black and white. Once again, the setting is recognizably the Plaza de Mayo with the *Casa Rosada* and a large Argentine flag in the background. In the foreground a line of Madres hold a long banner, with a crowd of supporters behind them. The headscarf symbol is used repeatedly on the banners and flags of the Madres, as well as being painted on the ground of the square. The statue in the centre of the Plaza de Mayo has been surrounded by scaffolding which is covered with hundreds of photographs of the disappeared.

Figure 4.

In *2000 Marcha de la resistencia* we can see that the Madres are even further distanced from the images than previously, when Bonafini suggested that each carry a picture of any child, not necessarily their own. Rather than each Madre carrying a picture, the photographs, or photocopies, have been arranged into a tower of images. Here the main impression is of the sheer number of images, and therefore of disappeared people. The distance makes it difficult to concentrate on any one face, and each image is not claimed by its subject's relative. Although each family will of course particularly cherish the memories of their own offspring, these individual stories have faded in the public sphere, to be replaced by the generic category of 'the disappeared'.

In tandem with the move to more iconic representation, there are several indications that, far from fading into the background, the Madres have gained renewed prominence in the social and political arena. This is perhaps not what one would have assumed in the early 1990s. Although the human rights organizations themselves never intended to give up their struggle for justice, wider society, politicians and the media seemed to be winning the fight in favour of a sort of institutional forgetting. This was particularly accentuated by Menem's policies of pardoning the convicted members of the armed forces and emphasizing the need to move on. The infamous *Punto Final* (Full Stop) and *Obediencia Debida* (Due Obedience) laws prevented further convictions except in a few tightly controlled situations, thwarting one of the main aims of the human rights groups. Economic difficulties were the prime concern for most of the population, leading to a desire for recovery and stability rather than the vaguer need to avoid impunity and delve into the problems of the past.

Against expectations, however, the Madres have strengthened their position in the public sphere. This is partly due to their tireless campaigning and regular trips abroad which sustain their level of international recognition. Their own CD-ROM emphasizes this by containing many images of the Madres abroad and with famous politicians and human rights activists, and even concerned music stars who have performed in aid of them, including U2 and Sting. They have also benefited from the more widespread interest in human rights in Argentina, triggered in part by the confessions of ex-military officers in the 1990s, and maintained more recently by legal developments leading to the possibility of prosecuting some former servicemen, and the avowed aims of President Néstor Kirchner, who has declared his commitment to investigating the events of the 'Dirty War'.[37] The growth of the electronic media has also facilitated their cooperation with groups in other parts of Latin America. This image clearly shows a large crowd in support of the aging Madres, with others groups present such as H.I.J.O.S, Hijos por la

---

[37] Sue Branford, 'Argentines See Glimmer of Hope', BBCi News, 31 October 2003
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/3227087.stm> [accessed 7 September 2004] ; 'Desde que asumió Kirchner, hay casi cien militares presos', *Clarín*, 11 June 2004
<http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/06/11/elpais/p-01801.htm> [accessed 7 September 2004]

Identidad y la Justicia contra el Olvido y el Silencio (Children for Identity and Justice against Forgetting and Silence), made up of children of the disappeared. The main group of Madres has also become committed to wider social ideals than merely identifying the fate of their children, crucial though this is.

The Madres have not only kept up pressure on successive Argentine governments but have also been an inspiration to groups of relatives in other countries. They have travelled widely in Latin America, the United States and Europe, winning numerous awards, and are well known. Guzmán Bouvard has noted that similar organizations function or have functioned in Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras.[38] Although the form of state terrorism known as enforced disappearance is not unique to Argentina, or indeed to Latin America, it seems that the Madres have formed one of the strongest and most striking locally-based human rights organizations. Naturally, the Madres themselves are now old women, many in their seventies and eighties, and despite their determination they will not continue forever. Their influence, however, will not be limited to Argentina or their own lifetimes. In fact images of women holding photographs of missing persons circulate in many other contexts, including Mexico, Chile, Algeria, and Guatemala.[39] Nevertheless, images like these, combined with the white headscarf of the Madres, are particularly associated with Argentina.

A woman carrying a photograph or a poster of her child has become a symbol of the ongoing struggle for justice and memory in Argentina. As many have realized, the two are intimately connected, with the lack of legal redress inseparable from the call to forget the events of the period of state terrorism. The Madres are vocal and insistent in the need to pay continuing attention to the fate of their offspring and the freedom of their

---

[38] Guzmán Bouvard, p. 237.

[39] 'Más vale tarde que nunca: Rosario Ibarra', *Noticieros Televisa*, <http://www.esmas.com/noticierostelevisa/mexico/324623.html> [accessed 26 September 2004]; 'Committee on Conscience: Photography', <http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/gallery/gallery.php> [accessed 26 September 2004]; Rachel Corner, 'Algeria: Mothers of the Disappeared', <http://www.foto8.com/foto8journal/RachelCorner/index.html> [accessed 26 September 2004]; 'Flowers in the Desert', <http://web.amnesty.org/actforwomen/373-300804-event-eng> [accessed 26 September 2004].

torturers. Although there has long been an inclination to look away from such demonstrations, and there are still other pressing demands in Argentine society, they have succeeded in bringing much awareness to their situation. Nationally and internationally, people are still watching the Madres and the images of their children. It is safe to assume that the issues they raise will not go away in the near future, although the question of whether saturation point will be reached remains open. With the new demands of the twenty-first century, including the work of the children of the disappeared and the potential court cases against former torturers, will these images continue to exercise their influence? As the image of Daniel Tarnopolsky with the photographs of his parents illustrates, the issue of financial compensation alone, which has been demanded by some groups and rejected by others, will not offer a definitive cure for the wounds of the past. While it is an indication that Massera has at last been held responsible for some of the atrocities which occurred during his rule, there is much still to be done in achieving justice for all the victims of state terrorism. Far from being an end, Kirchner's Presidency signals the beginning of an effective investigation into the lasting effects of the 'Dirty War'. Tarnopolsky, who now looks of a similar age to his parents in the photographs, repeats the gesture made famous by campaigners of the previous generation, suggesting that such demonstrations will continue in the future. His action, which has recurred so frequently and continues to be prominent in human rights discourse, remains a powerful and moving gesture.

Old Images, New Contexts: Remembering the Disappeared on the World Wide Web

Since their original functions as family snapshots or identity card portraits, photographs of the Argentine disappeared have travelled into contexts and media that were barely imaginable at the time of their original making. Having first been moved into the public sphere by their appearance on placards during demonstrations by the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, as we saw in Chapter One, they have later been reproduced in digital format on CD-ROM and the Internet. Among the thousands of web sites dealing with the subject of the so-called 'Dirty War', many contain images of the disappeared. Some of these are for purely illustrative purposes, while others are the main focus of the site and form part of a digital memorial to the disappeared. Digital images and memorials clearly differ from their traditional forms, as rather than having a fixed location, they can theoretically be accessed from anywhere in the world by anyone with an internet connection.[1] They are a contemporary means of transmitting information, expressing sorrow, proclaiming the need to remember and conveying a desire that the atrocities of Argentina's most recent dictatorship are not repeated.

This chapter aims to explore the continuing contemporary use of photographic images of the Argentine disappeared on the World Wide Web. In the age of digital culture images circulate in previously unimagined forms and contexts. Taking two web sites which make use of images of the disappeared as case studies, I examine how the images are presented and employed, the role of the visitor in exploring them, and their part in memory discourse. Most importantly, through a detailed discussion of recent debates about digital culture, I will ask what is at stake in making false assumptions about the extreme 'newness' and radical difference of digital technology which may deny a nuanced consideration of its cultural and political background and implications. To this end, I will also argue that it is essential to locate online memorials in their digital,

---

[1] Rates of internet access are increasing rapidly in Latin America, particularly Argentina and Mexico, although they remain far lower than those in the West. Nicholas Mirzoeff, *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 105-06.

national and international contexts, for only in this way is it possible to understand both the role of digital culture and of cultural specificity in memory processes.

Photographic images of the disappeared have entered an area of rapidly evolving technology that has not been exempt from critical attention and questioning. Since the possibilities of digital technology have become apparent, a variety of responses from the enthusiastic to the anxious have dealt with this topic. As I will explain, these debates have been for the most part polarized and preoccupied with technological extremes, rather than focusing on the cultural, social and historical contexts of such changes.

Digital Culture

Digital imagery is easily classified as a recent development, although in fact the first digital conversions were made by scientists in the 1950s.[2] However the technology really became widely accessible to professionals and its importance became recognized in the late 1980s.[3] Even more recently, personal computers, scanners and digital cameras have become within the reach of many Westerners for small business, education and leisure purposes. Simply put, a digital image consists of encoded electronic data. The image is divided into a grid made up of pixels, the smallest unit of digital imagery, each of which has a number which corresponds to its intensity or colour. The digital image, then, is composed of tiny but discrete blocks, in contrast to the traditional analogue photograph, in which representation occurs through continuous variation. Again, the analogue photograph is a physical result of chemical processes, while the digital is a conversion of information and not necessarily a physical entity at all. Computer technology opens up the possibility of image creation without the referent in the real which has long been viewed as an essential component of photography. In addition,

---

[2] William J. Mitchell, *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), p. 3.
[3] Martin Lister, *The Photographic Image in Digital Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 1.

analogue images may now be converted into digital format by scanning them into a computer.[4]

Some theorists, most famously William J. Mitchell, have seized upon these technological developments as evidence of a fundamental shift in photography and, consequently, visual culture as a whole. Mitchell's argument focuses on the nature of digital imagery, which he claims, 'actually differs as profoundly from a traditional photograph as does a photograph from a painting'.[5] As this quote suggests, his argument is reminiscent of the reaction following the introduction of lens-based photography in the 1830s. He explains the physical differences between analogue and digital photography; principally, that digital images are graded discretely rather than continuously, may be copied without loss of quality, and may be readily manipulated. These factors are, according to Mitchell, sufficient to speak of the 'death' of photography from the late 1980s, and our entrance into the 'post-photographic era'.[6]

These claims have been criticized by many, including Lev Manovich, who challenges Mitchell's assertions of the difference of digital imagery as being based on purely abstract principles rather than concrete technologies and functions. In reply to Mitchell's points about the features of digital imagery, Manovich reminds us that there *is* degradation in copies of digital images due to the compression of file space, and that even analogue photographs have always been manipulable and manipulated. While Mitchell gives examples of particular manipulated photographs throughout the history of the medium, he maintains the idea of traditional photographs in general as inherently truthful, which, according to Manovich, is problematic. Manovich calls for recognition of the paradoxes of digital photography, one of which he identifies as the way in which

---

[4] Mitchell, pp. 4-6; Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 138-44; Martin Lister, 'Photography in the Age of Electronic Imaging', in *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, ed. by Liz Wells, 2nd edition, (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 305-47.
[5] Mitchell, p.4.
[6] Ibid., p. 225.

digital imagery is both different from older media and part of a continuous development, rather than a complete break from traditional forms of representation.[7]

Manovich's plea for a more nuanced debate is apt in a field in which academic discourse has tended to be polarized, with some seeing the advent of digitization as a rupture in visual culture, while others have viewed it as a development such as those that have been taking place since the conception of chemical photography itself. The technological implications of digital imagery have led some scholars to foresee an end to a belief in the truth-value of photography. Fred Ritchin, for example, warns that 'the new malleability of the image may eventually lead to a profound undermining of photography's status as an inherently truthful pictorial form'.[8] Ritchin envisions a scenario in which all faith in photojournalism is lost, editors may freely manipulate the images under their control despite the will of the photographer, or even that photographers themselves may become dispensable, and images will be created from an electronic database. Some of these developments, the manipulating ability of the editor for example, are indeed realistic, but Ritchin's apocalyptic vision signals an anxiety which is not unique to this situation.[9] Martin Lister dismisses it as 'typical of the fears which radical technological change tends to generate among the practitioners of a traditional medium'.[10] Moreover, Ritchin's view of photography as 'inherently truthful' and somehow transparent fails to take account of the staging, manipulation and mediation that has always been part of this means of representation.

Furthermore, digital photography is growing in an era of general technological concern that has been termed 'digital culture'. Our society has been flooded by telecommunications and information networks and electronic products. In its widest

---

[7] Lev Manovich, 'The Paradoxes of Digital Photography', in *The Photography Reader*, ed. by Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 240-49 (p. 241).

[8] Fred Ritchin, 'Photojournalism in the Age of Computers', in *The Critical Image: Essays on Contemporary Photography,* ed. by Carol Squiers (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1991), pp. 28-37 (p. 28).

[9] Sarah Kember, *Virtual Anxiety: Photography, New Technologies and Subjectivity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 1.

[10] Lister, 'Photography in the Age of Electronic Imaging', p. 305.

sense, however, 'digital *culture* becomes a trope for the ethos of contemporary life'.[11] Digital culture, then, is positioned between those who welcome its possibilities and those who fear its consequences; those who see it as a complete break from what has gone before and those who wish to integrate it into a history of visual culture. Lister makes two important points regarding this polarization. Firstly, he maintains that 'little understanding of the significance of new image technologies will be gained without relating them to photographic culture'.[12] This is in opposition to those critics who have focused narrowly on the technology itself, to the exclusion of historical and social context. Secondly, Lister remarks that 'the rhetoric surrounding new image technologies has constructed an idea of their "newness" by setting up some false dichotomies and oppositions with lens based media'.[13] It is true that the problem of the authenticity of digital images will not be solved by simply contrasting them with the supposed veracity of traditional photographs. Again, photographs and digital images alike are rarely found in isolation, but are combined with text, captions, and other information. While much stress has been placed on the innovative nature of digital images, and digital culture in general, this has often been at the expense of recognizing the origin of such developments in visual culture and the history of photography. A subtle consideration of such issues is therefore needed. How are digital images employed, and how is this different from the functions of traditional, chemically-produced images? What is their impact on issues of photographic truth?

These debates provide the background to my consideration of digital images in web sites that deal with the period of state terrorism in Argentina. In this case traditional photographs or copies of photographs have been digitized for publication on the Internet, providing them with a new context and a widened audience. I will analyse two web sites originating from Argentina: 'El Proyecto Desaparecidos' (The 'Disappeared' Project), a series of linked pages about disappeared persons all over the world that includes a Memory Wall of Argentine *desaparecidos*; and 'Sin Olvido' (Without Forgetting), a

---

[11] Lauren Rabinovitz and Abraham Geil, *Memory Bytes: History, Technology, and Digital Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 4.
[12] Lister, *The Photographic Image in Digital Culture*, p. 2.
[13] Ibid., p. 8.

gallery of images of persons disappeared between 1975 and 1983 in Argentina and designed by the father of one of the disappeared.[14] These sites were chosen for a number of reasons. On the one hand, they both foreground a large number of images presented in a way which stresses their centrality to the site's meaning. Furthermore, 'Desaparecidos' is a well-established site which is linked from many other sites about this period of Argentine history, while 'Sin Olvido' is the largest number of online images of the disappeared that I have been able to find. Rather than being the digital wing of a particular human rights organization, the sites exist independently and focus on the process of remembering and the legacy of the military dictatorship.

One intention of these sites is to humanize the subjects, the disappeared persons themselves, to proclaim their previous existence and powerfully remind the audience of the atrocities committed. In addition, the World Wide Web is often praised for its interactive possibilities, which ideally transform the passive viewer into an active participant in the experience, and as I will explain, these web sites offer the visitor the chance to control, at least to some extent, which images they study. We return, however, to the question of how and whether such images help us to remember, a question whose relevance is exacerbated by the debates of digital culture.

It will, by now, be clear that there has been a growing preoccupation, even obsession, with a culture of memory, that leads to proliferating memorials, books, exhibitions, museums and archives. This is not limited to Latin America, but is present in many national and transnational contexts since the Holocaust and, more recently, the end of the Cold War.[15] It is understandable that the World Wide Web has become a growing part of this phenomenon, considering that web sites are relatively quick and inexpensive to set up, and the technology required is increasingly accessible in the West, while in

---

[14] 'El Proyecto Desaparecidos', <http://www.desaparecidos.org> and 'Sin Olvido' <http:www.sinolvido.org> [accessed 1 September 2004]. The 'Sin Olvido' web site was first pointed out to me by María Laura Guembe of the Memoria Abierta archive in Buenos Aires.
[15] T.G.Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper, 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures, and Dynamics', in *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 3-85 (pp. 3-6).

Latin America Internet access is more limited but growing rapidly.[16] Some theorists believe that, paradoxically, such concern with memory may in fact lead to forgetfulness about the past. Andreas Huyssen identifies the new media technology as partially causing cultural amnesia by blurring the distinction between past and present, fact and fiction, reality and perception.[17] In this he seems to be in agreement with Pierre Nora's idea of *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, overtaking true memory.[18] Nora is unequivocal that 'we speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left'.[19] Nora and Huyssen seem nostalgic for an era before the complexities of the postmodern and the digital. Marita Sturken, however, maintains that the supposed 'culture of amnesia' 'actually involves the generation of memory in new forms' and foregrounds camera images in forms of cultural re-enactment and representation.[20] As the effects of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington continue to resonate around the world, the Internet has become an increasingly central forum for news, opinion, debate and tribute. Its lack of any form of effective control or centralized management leads some to praise its 'democratic' possibilities, while its size and haphazard structure may also be overwhelming.[21] It is hardly surprising, then, in this atmosphere, that there is an abundance of memorial web sites for various personal and collective tragedies, and that their effects may be disputed.

---

[16] Pegasus Research International, 'Latin American Web Users',
<http://www.pegasusresearch.net/metrics/growthla.htm> [accessed 5 September 2004]
[17] Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 253.
[18] Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations 26* (1989), 7-24.
[19] Nora, p. 7.
[20] Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (London, University of California Press, 1997), p. 2.
[21] Sturken and Cartwright, p. 338.

Navigating Web Sites concerning the Disappeared

Figure 5.

One such site, 'El Proyecto Desaparecidos', contains information about disappeared persons of many nationalities, principally from Latin America but also from other countries including Turkey and Algeria. It is written predominantly in Spanish but with some translation into English. The main page summarizes the site's intention with a slogan that is familiar in Argentina: 'Memoria – Verdad – Justicia' (Memory – Truth – Justice) (figure 5). No particular author of the site is named, but the clear impression is of a group project of commemoration, as indicated by the use of the second person plural in the introductory text. In the Argentine section the aim of the creators is set out in more detail:

> El Proyecto Desaparecidos es una propuesta de distintos organismos y activistas de derechos humanos cuyo propósito es recuperar y mantener la memoria, entender lo que pasó en Argentina durante la 'Guerra Sucia' y luchar contra la impunidad. Te invitamos a visitarlo, a contribuir, a unirte a nuestros esfuerzos - y más que nada, a recordar.

(Project Disappeared is a joint project of several human rights organizations and activists with the purpose of recovering and maintaining memory, understanding what happened in Argentina during the 'Dirty War' and fighting against impunity. We invite you to visit it, to contribute, to join our efforts - and above all, to remember.)

The text assumes the importance of remembering the events of the 'Dirty War' and insists on the individuality of the victims.

Figure 6.

The Argentine pages, (figure 6) in which the light blue and white stripes of the Argentine flag form a prominent part of the design, are centred around a collection of over eight hundred images of the disappeared. The user is therefore provided with the possibility of navigating through such a quantity of information by exploring various subgroups of nationality, Argentine province, or profession. So, for example, it is possible to view a group of portraits of disappeared lawyers, or artists, or Chilean citizens, or residents of Tucumán, or perhaps most poignantly, adolescents and pregnant women. It is also possible to view a list of names, arranged alphabetically. The principal presentation of the images, however, is the Muro de la Memoria, or Memory Wall, which, we are told, 'es una buena forma de darnos cuenta de la inmensidad del dolor que los militares crearon en Argentina, y al mismo tiempo recordar a todos y a cada uno de

los desaparecidos.' ('is a good way of realizing the immensity of the pain created by the military in Argentina, and at the same time remembering each and every one of the disappeared.') Given the large number of images, there is the practical necessity of a warning of long download times on a slow Internet connection. Once accessed, however, the Memory Wall reveals row after row of small, black and white, scanned images, many of rather poor quality. In a few cases where it was not obtainable, a silhouetted profile replaces a photographic image. It is possible to click on an image to be shown further information about that person, which in some cases is a testimony or tribute page submitted by friends or family. The immediate impression, though, is of the sheer number of people pictured, although it must be remembered that even this is only a small fraction of the estimated 30 000 victims of the period of state repression. Focus on one picture, and the face of an individual looks out at you, but keep the mouse button pressed down and the many faces blur into one as they go scrolling past.
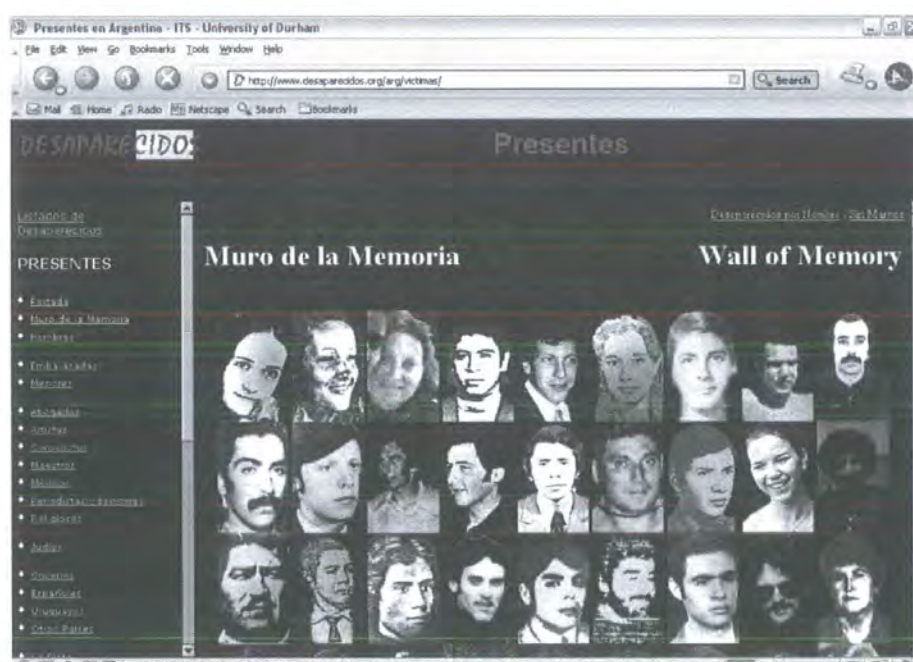

Figure 7.

'El Proyecto Desaparecidos' was set up in 1996, which seems relatively early in the Internet boom for a non-profit organization from Latin America. By contrast, 'Sin Olvido' is more recent, and in fact parts of the site are still under construction. It

contains some similar features to the earlier site, including a banner with the slogan 'No podemos, no queremos, no debemos olvidarlos' ('We cannot, do not want to, must not forget them') which emphasizes the duty to remember. In addition, it also stresses the collaborative nature of the work that has gone into the site. In fact, closer examination reveals that the same images from 'Desaparecidos' are repeated in 'Sin Olvido', with the addition of others, as it is a larger site.
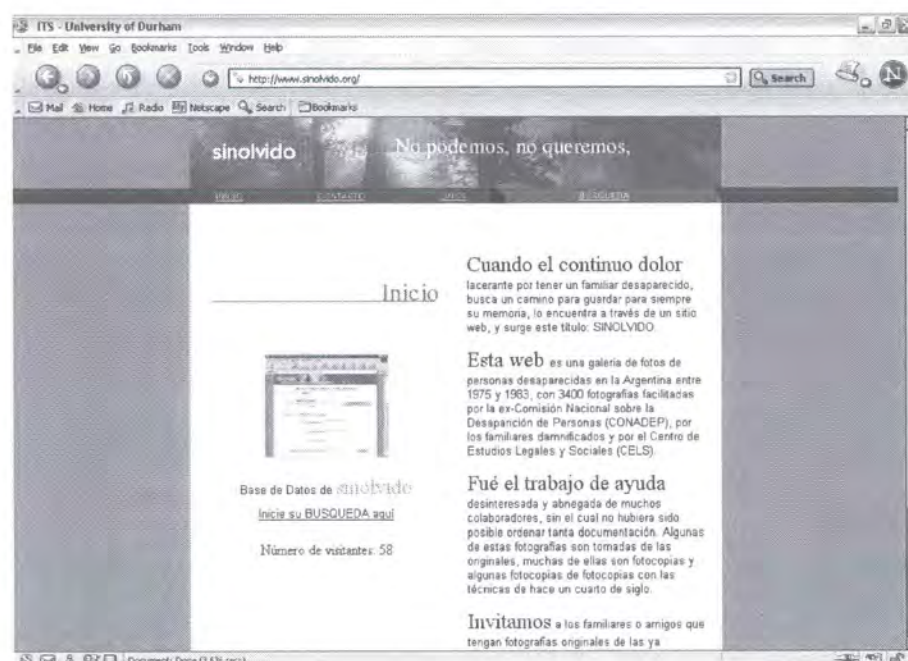
Figure 8.

'Sin Olvido' (figure 8) is a gallery of 3400 photographs of persons disappeared in Argentina between 1975 (just before the military coup) and 1983. The images are provided by CONADEP, the commission which investigated the disappearances, by families of the disappeared themselves, and by CELS, the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (Centre for Legal and Social Studies), a non-governmental organization based in Buenos Aires. Although there are many more images here than in the 'Proyecto Desaparecidos', this impression is not clearly given as it is not possible to view page after page of thumbnail images. Instead, the visitor makes a search by name or date of disappearance, or views an alphabetical list of names. When a name is chosen and clicked on, the image appears on the screen with the basic details of name and date of

disappearance (figure 9). The images are quite large although again, many are not particularly high quality and all are black and white. As the front page of the site explains, this is due to the fact that while some of the images are taken directly from scanned photographs originally made a quarter of a century ago, others are scanned from photocopies or even photocopies of photocopies, with the inevitable degradation that this involves.

Figure 9.

The quality of the images is obviously a problem not only for web sites but for all publications and exhibitions using aging photographs that were not designed for continual reproduction, but were probably intended as simple snapshots or identity card portraits. Digitization does solve some of the problems of storage that face traditional archives, although it presents its own issues of electronic storage and possible accessibility difficulties if future technology makes present methods obsolete.[22] It avoids

---

[22] It is worth noting that human rights organizations in Argentina are now using a combination of traditional and digital archives. For example, Memoria Abierta (<http://www.memoriaabierta.org.ar>) is an alliance of eight human rights organizations that focuses on collating and digitizing information from various sources, including several thousand photographs, with the eventual aim of making them available to all on the Internet. After digitization, the original copies of the images are returned to their archives or owners.

the physical degradation of old, fading photographs, although as Manovich pointed out, compression may involve its own degradation, leaving large images with a pixellated appearance.[23] Both of the web sites analysed here still face the traditional problem of low quality copies even though they are also making use of new technology.

It is a commonplace that photographs are rarely viewed in isolation, but are generally accompanied by text, captions, headlines, or other information.[24] This continues to be the case on the World Wide Web, with the additional possibilities of background colour, pop-ups, flashing or moving graphics, and even music or other sound files. Therefore digital images may not be examined in isolation, but in the context of this media convergence.[25] Both sites examined here are relatively simple and seem to be designed to foreground the digitized images: in 'Proyecto Desaparecidos', the background is plain black, while in 'Sin Olvido' it is an unobtrusive green. In both cases there is little extraneous material, unnecessary text or hyperlinks. Nevertheless, the images contrast sharply with the rest of the site, and with the sharp lines and bright colours of digital images to which the user may be more accustomed.

I suggest that there is a tension between the colours, smooth lines and 'newness' of the web design, and the grey, blurred and grainy images in both web sites. In a field which continually accentuates the radical difference of digital technology, it is significant to note that in practice, traditional and newer elements are interwoven. This juxtaposition may be problematized, as in Nelly Richard's analysis of the work of Chilean artist Carlos Altamirano. An exhibition by Altamirano set up a series of colour images from different contexts, interspersed with black and white images of *desaparecidos*. Richard examines the relation between the glossy colour images and the grainy black and white photocopies, noting that the *images* of the disappeared, as well as the missing people themselves, seem frozen in the past, or, as she puts it, 'en el presente continuo de una

---

[23] Manovich, p. 243.

[24] Roland Barthes, 'Rhetoric of the Image', in *Image-Music-Text*, ed. and trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 32-51.

[25] Sturken and Cartwright, p. 134.

muerte en suspenso' ('in the continuous present of a suspended death').[26] According to Richard, there is a conflict between the photographic trace which provides evidence of the existence of the disappeared, and the constant flow of images from the media, particularly television, which she terms 'tecnologías del olvido' ('technologies of forgetting').[27] New technologies may exhibit a tendency to elide the complexities of past experience. This is a concern which must be borne in mind while studying the World Wide Web, saturated as it is with images of all kinds, even when the explicit purpose of the site is that of memorialization.

The combination of the images, copied from analogue photographs, with the contemporary web design seems bound up with concerns surrounding the authenticity of the images. Debates surrounding authenticity, or the truth value of images, have been going on since the very beginning of photography. Photography's essence has been defined as its ability to prove that the subject was really *there* in front of the lens.[28] It has been popularly accepted that the camera never lies, a view which is closely linked to the emphasis placed on the photographic referent. The analogue image is a trace, or index, of its referent, and high value has been placed on the indexicality of the photograph.[29] At the same time, the veracity of photography has always been questioned by academics, photographers, and others who are aware that the camera may not lie, but the photographer *can* and *does*, or at least is always selective. The supposed neutrality of the camera has correctly been called into question.[30]

This argument has been further complicated in the field of digital culture, with many, such as Fred Ritchin, fearing the faith in photographic truth will be weakened by the advent of digitization. Since computer technology now makes it possible to produce images *without* a referent in the real, questions about photographic truth and a potential loss of indexicality have been raised. Taking what Mitchell has called the 'un-sticking'

---

[26] Nelly Richard, 'Memoria, fotografía y desaparición: drama y tramas', *Punto de Vista*, 68 (2000), 29-33 (p. 31).
[27] Richard, p. 31.
[28] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, trans. by Richard Howard (London: Vintage, 2000).
[29] Sturken and Cartwright, p. 138.
[30] John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation* (London: Macmillan, 1988), pp.63-64.

of the referent from the image to its logical conclusion has led some to propose that it will be almost impossible to prove what was real in any photographic image.[31] This could have important consequences in journalism and history, to give two obvious examples. Sturken and Cartwright add that 'we can also imagine a context in which all historical images are up for grabs'.[32] The significance of the photograph as index could be transferred to the significance of the photographic image as icon, resembling its object but not necessarily being an actual trace of it.

In the case of web sites concerning the Argentine dictatorship, there is considerably more at stake than abstract debates around the real and the referent. In the face of a longstanding polemic about the events of the dictatorship, beginning with military propaganda and official lies about the fate of the disappeared, there is still much emphasis placed on sites such as 'Desaparecidos' and 'Sin Olvido' being regarded as trustworthy. The use of images is one means of accentuating the reality of the story told by such web sites, particularly when we can see that those images are reproductions of the original family photographs or identity card portraits possessed by the victims and their relatives. In this context the fact that the images are not of the highest resolution, and are visibly copied from old analogue prints, may be of crucial significance in their deployment and meaning in these commemorative sites. Despite the possibility that photographs may be manipulated, their power makes it difficult to deny that their subjects existed, and by extension we then accept what we are told about their fate. Of course, this relies on the combination of images and text to provide this information.

Others scholars have explored the tendency to believe in the 'truth' of photographic images in the context of digital culture. They are certainly easy to manipulate and the possibility of multiple copies may not improve their reliability. Do we feel doubt about the authenticity of digital images? For the casual viewer, the simple answer is probably no, although a brief consideration of the web sites examined here will lead to the realization that we cannot know with absolute certainty that the images are correctly

---

[31] Mitchell, p. 31.
[32] Sturken and Cartwright, p. 141.

labelled, that their subjects are who the captions say they are, and that they were disappeared by the security forces as claimed. Most users are, however, unlikely to make or even desire to make any attempt to verify this, although those with their own agenda can take advantage of this slight element of uncertainty.[33] For example, another memorial site, 'Memoria Viva' (Living Memory), which focuses on the Chilean disappeared, frequently has messages posted in its online guestbook accusing its creators of lying about the Pinochet dictatorship and claming that the disappeared left the country of their own accord – but these users are in the minority.[34] 'Sin Olvido' does name the major sources of its images and therefore it would theoretically be possible to trace them. But is this the point? The very presence of the images tends to emphasize the events of the 'Dirty War' and most users are prepared to trust them.

As with the images used in the Madres de Plaza de Mayo demonstrations, for many users, the images on 'Desaparecidos' and 'Sin Olvido' may have crossed into the realm of iconicity rather than indexicality. The explicit aim of 'Desaparecidos' is to show the disappeared as individuals, but whether it succeeds in this objective is debatable. There are many images and the majority of users will have no personal connection to any one of them in particular. The sight of so many victims of state terror is shocking, but does it make us consider their individuality, or rather their group identity, 'the disappeared'?

Moreover, what can we know about the visitors to these websites, their identity and actions? I have called these people 'users' to underline the fact that web sites such as 'Desaparecidos' and 'Sin Olvido' are not simple, passive experiences.[35] The much-lauded interactivity of the World Wide Web means that users are given options and make decisions about what to see, in what order, as well as when to leave the site and 'surf' elsewhere. There is even the possibility of submitting material to the site and thus becoming a co-author. According to the webmaster of 'Desaparecidos', the site has over 1 000 different visitors every day, although it is impossible to know who they are, unless

---

[33] I explore the issue of accuracy and truth-telling on the World Wide Web in more detail in chapter 3 with reference to perpetrator images.

[34] 'Memoria Viva: Archivo electrónico de las violaciones de los Derechos Humanos durante la Dictadura en Chile', <http://www.memoriaviva.com> [accessed 31 August 2004].

[35] Lister, 'Photography in the Age of Electronic Imaging', p. 339.

they form part of the minority who make the effort to contact the site with a comment or question.[36] The counter on the front page of 'Sin Olvido' reveals that the site has received over 30 000 'hits' at the time of writing. The way in which these users experience the site emerges out of a combination of the design of the site, and hence the will of its creators, and their own decisions. There are, in addition, some technical constraints, principally that those with slow connections may lose patience when trying to see the Memory Wall in 'Desaparecidos', but with more modern computers and faster Internet connections this problem is becoming less relevant.

The decisions that users make as they navigate through the web site will of course depend on their particular interests. A relative or friend of a disappeared person will naturally search for their name, and doing so may be a primary motive for being there. Many visitors, however, will not have such a personal connection to the situation. Even so, they are likely to pick sections that relate to their own concerns. In 'Desaparecidos', for example, they might be able click on their profession to see images of the disappeared people who also practised it. Maybe they would browse the rows of pictures and choose someone similar in age, or whose face somehow appeals to them. In 'Sin Olvido', they could search for dates that were significant to them, and in both sites, they can choose from a list of names. There is no right or wrong way to move through the site. Having said this, the user's actions are also shaped by the design of the site. The Memory Wall in 'Desaparecidos' shows the portraits alphabetically; surely the ones at the top, those who surnames begin with A, have been viewed many more times than the lower pictures which one must scroll down to get to. 'Sin Olvido' is less suitable for casual browsing, and more designed for someone with a specific name in mind. It is also lacking the personal aspect of 'Desaparecidos', where some of the families and friends of the disappeared have made personal digital tributes to them. These are revealed by clicking on the small image in the Memory Wall, and often contain additional photographic images. Clicking on any image also leads to an invitation to submit information about or images of that person.

---

[36] Electronic interview conducted June 7 2004.

A comparison of these two sites reveals that they utilize many of the same images, sourced from the files of CONADEP, although in 'Sin Olvido' the image used is larger and sometimes more closely cropped. In both cases the site revolves around the presentation of images. If the user clicks on many of the images in 'Desaparecidos', they are taken to a page created by the friends or family of that particular victim. This page may be a different colour from the rest of the site and include the story of the disappearance, and frequently, more images of the person, which may be larger and in colour. It may also appeal for any news of their fate, and there is an invitation to contact the site. It is clearly a personal expression of tribute and grief, and it is poignant to note that many pages link to others in the same site, as husbands and wives or siblings were both disappeared. The digital images in the site still have the appearance of their analogue originals, and perform some of the same functions, such as displaying the disappeared person as whole and healthy, but they also have additional features, acting as links to further pages. In 'Sin Olvido', there is no extra information beyond the personal data of name and date of disappearance. In 'Desaparecidos' there is an uneasy, though compelling, relationship between the numerous anonymous faces of the Memory Wall and the personal information behind each image. By contrast, 'Sin Olvido' is a simpler design, but retains some tension between the idea of naming and picturing the disappeared and the result, which does not stress their individuality. Nevertheless the sites are only visible when the user finds them and makes the effort to navigate through them, a process which is controlled by both the visitor and the structure of the site.

Web sites as Archives

Thus the web sites seem to be situated somewhere between the memorial and the photographic archive, both similar to and yet distinct from either. An archive may be defined as a quantitative ensemble of documents, in this case images, in which unity is generally imposed by ownership, and each document suffers from a loss of its original meaning or use, as it is ordered and homogenized within the group. The archive is also

often characterized by a desire for completeness.[37] A memorial, on the other hand, I take to mean a physical site established in memory of a person, people or event and is often intended to be a permanent structure. Memorials are constructed for multiple reasons and may both create and be created by a community.[38] Both the memorial and the archive are shaped by the institutions that initiate, own and manage them.

Scholars, including Pierre Nora, have noted the significance given to the archive in today's society, which forms part of the obsession with memory that has been so often remarked upon.[39] In his volume *Archive Fever*, Jacques Derrida develops the idea of the effects of new media, claiming that 'what is no longer archived in the same way is no longer lived in the same way. Archivable meaning is also and in advance codetermined by the structure that archives.'[40] So, while in his 1986 essay Allan Sekula indicated the importance of the filing cabinet, as both literal artefact and metaphor for the organizational structure of the archive, we might now focus on the significance of the computer network.[41] I suggest that the desire to archive photographs of the disappeared is a form of resistance against those, such as some members of the armed forces, who would deny that there were so many victims, or that they were murdered by security forces. No detailed records kept by the junta have emerged, although there is evidence of the systematic destruction of files to cover traces of the atrocities, and the investigating commission admitted that the number of the disappeared had been underestimated due to the difficulty in tracing them.[42] While a concern with collecting, organizing and ordering remains, the Internet means that digital archives can be rapidly accessed worldwide by many users simultaneously. Online archives also give the impression of a certain amount of flexibility with regards to their structure, although the traditional alphabetical or

---

[37] Allan Sekula, 'Reading an Archive: Photography between Labour and Capital', in *The Photography Reader*, ed. by Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 443-53 (pp.444-46).
[38] James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 6.
[39] Nora, p. 14.
[40] Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. by Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 18.
[41] Allan Sekula, 'The Body and the Archive', in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, ed. by Richard Bolton (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 343-89 (p. 352).
[42] Report of CONADEP, Introductory note to Part II: The Victims, (1984), <http://www.nuncamas.org/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_209.htm> [accessed 31 August 2004].

chronological forms of cataloguing remain as well. They maintain the desire to catalogue the past, but are also situated in the ever-expanding, permanently unfinished world of the Internet.[43]

Web sites as Memorials

As well as archiving, web sites such as 'Desaparecidos' and 'Sin Olvido' form digital tributes to the disappeared, and are explicit about the perceived necessity of remembering. James Young, in his authoritative study of Holocaust memorials, names the injunction to remember as one of the key motives for building memorials, and although it is in a digital context, this reason can be clearly traced here.[44] The Internet has become part of the growing number of physical memorials, monuments, museums, publications and exhibitions that commemorate particular events in the past. Web sites provide an alternative to a physical 'place', and also give the impression of one. As Sturken and Cartwright note, 'The term "web site" encourages users to think of a physical place, although such a place exists only within virtual space.'[45] In other words, despite the fact that is not a physical place, it does exist as an interactive space for memory.

In fact memorial web sites from Argentina exist in a variety of contexts, including the national debates surrounding memory in the Southern Cone, the vast network of the Internet which includes other memorial web sites, and other physical memorials. The legacy of the most recent military dictatorship in Argentina continues to be a debate which is polemical and often bitter on both sides. For a long time during the process of redemocratization, the armed forces still held enough power to constantly threaten destabilization and yet another military coup. Although the trials of the military leaders were significant and the report of CONADEP was widely publicized, Alfonsín's government subsequently made repeated concessions which culminated in his successor,

---

[43] Peter Lunenfeld, 'Unfinished Business', in *The Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), pp. 6-21.
[44] Young, *The Texture of Memory*, p. 2.
[45] Sturken and Cartwright, p. 341.

Carlos Menem's blanket pardon of the military criminals, including the generals of the military junta. Menem then urged the country to move on and leave the past behind. During the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s, therefore, there was little official acknowledgement and commemoration of the fate of the disappeared. It was left to the human rights organizations, of which the Madres de Plaza de Mayo were the most vociferous, to fight for public remembrance and hold marches and vigils on important dates, such as the 24 March, the anniversary of the military coup.[46]

It follows that there were also few physical memorials to the victims of repression that were sanctioned by the authorities, although this is gradually changing. For example, a Memory Park has recently been developed along the bank of the River Plate in Buenos Aires.[47] Menem proposed the demolition of the Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada (Navy Mechanics' School) or ESMA, the most notorious clandestine detention center, a plan which was strongly objected to by relatives of the disappeared. Recently President Néstor Kirchner has confirmed that the area will instead be turned into a museum.[48] However this development will obviously take years to complete. By contrast a simple web site can be set up in a few days, and even large web sites such as those I have examined here may be run with comparatively little expense. The human rights organizations, who have struggled to make their voices heard in the mainstream media, can control their own sites and reach a global audience. Organizations such as the Madres have often sought to be recognized internationally – how much easier would their task have been in the 1970s if they had had access to email and the Internet?[49]

[46] Federico Guillermo Lorenz, '¿De quién es el 24 de marzo? Las luchas por la memoria del golpe de 1976', in *Las conmemoraciones: Las disputas en las fechas "in-felices"*, ed. by Elizabeth Jelin (Madrid: Siglo veintiuno, 2003), pp. 53-100; Elizabeth Jelin, *State Repression and the Struggles for Memory* (London: Latin America Bureau, 2003), pp. 36-41.
[47] Andreas Huyssen, 'Memory Sites in an Expanded Field: The Memory Park in Buenos Aires', in *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), pp. 94-109.
[48] 'Argentina Plans Dirty War Museum', BBCi News, 10 February 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/3474987.stm> [accessed 31 August 2004].
[49] Although the Madres are not stereotypical Internet users, we can speculate that they could have used it effectively to gain international attention, as was the case in Mexico, where 'The Zapatista support movement successfully stopped the shooting war in 1994 because the Mexican government is susceptible to adverse publicity in the U.S., a by-product of economic restructuring.' María Elena Martínez Torres, 'Civil Society, the Internet, and the Zapatistas', *Peace Review*, 13:3 (2001), 347-55 (348).

Web sites such as 'Desaparecidos' and 'Sin Olvido' also use digital images in a way which follows naturally from the employment of analogue photographs and photocopies in the work of Argentine human rights organizations and relatives' groups. Photographic images of disappeared people have long been part of campaigns and marches in the human rights arena, and continue to be used until the present day.[50] A board or wall of images has existed in the office of the Madres and Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo) as well as being temporarily constructed in the Plaza de Mayo for some demonstrations.[51] The difference of digital images lies in their accessibility, malleability and easy transmission, yet their presentation and grainy quality are also reminiscent of traditional images.

Argentine memorial web sites are also situated in the context of the proliferation of other global memorials, both digital and conventional. It is the Holocaust, as the central trope of horror of the twentieth century, that remains at the forefront of memory culture, with numerous Holocaust memorials, monuments, and museums across the world, and images of the Holocaust burned into our collective visual memory.[52] There are now also thousands of web sites devoted to this topic. More recently, the September 11 attacks have been widely covered on the Internet, including several comprehensive memorial sites.[53] Other web sites are dedicated to the memory of Vietnam War veterans and World War II soldiers, to give just two examples. Memorial web sites share some characteristics of traditional memorials, while they are also clearly distinct from physical monuments. While this form of remembrance now seems well-established, the question of its role in memory remains open.

---

[50] One example is the rows of images attached to the fence of the ESMA during the commemoration of the 28th anniversary of the military coup in March 2004. See
<http://www.memoriaabierta.org.ar/memoria/memoria.php> [accessed 31 August 2004].
[51] Rita Arditti, *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999), p. 3.
[52] Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
[53] See for example CNN's memorial, which features many images of the victims,
<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/memorial/lists/by-name/index.html> [accessed 31 August 2004]; also the 'September 11 Memorial', <http://www.sept11thmemorial.com/> [accessed 31 August 2004];
<http://terroristattack.com/index.php> [accessed 31 August 2004].

Despite the dominance of the English language in the digital world, there are also a large number of web sites covering the topic of Argentine state terrorism, many in Spanish. All the major human rights organizations in Argentina now have web sites.[54] In addition, ex-*desaparecidos* and those interested in them can communicate via Internet groups and mailing lists.[55] There are other memorial web sites on this subject, but most of them use fewer images or are less comprehensive than the sites examined here. For example, the 'Galería de los Desaparecidos' (Vanished Gallery) contains information and tributes but, despite its name, does not feature images.[56]

The issue here is that images, digital culture and monuments have all been problematized as hindering remembrance, with some theorists, such as Andreas Huyssen, connecting the new technology with the obsession with memory which leads to monuments but not necessarily to a deep consideration of the past.[57] Young's *The Texture of Memory* admits that memorials and monuments (and he notes that there is no clear distinction between the two) have fallen out of favour, condemned as static and obsolete. 'For once it was recognized that monuments necessarily mediate memory, even as they seek to inspire it, they came to be regarded as displacements of the memory they were supposed to embody.'[58] This displacement of memory is at the centre of the work of Pierre Nora, who believes that the ritualized expression of memory as expressed in objects and places, *lieux de mémoire*, is replacing 'true' memory.[59] As we have explored the presence and use of the memorial web sites as places, we can see their relevance to Pierre Nora's definition of *lieux de mémoire*, which he claims 'have no

---

[54] For example, the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, <http://www.madres.org> [accessed 31 August 2004]; the Madres de Plaza de Mayo – Línea Fundadora, <http://www.madres-lineafundadora.org> [accessed 1 September 2004]; the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, < http://www.abuelas.org.ar> [accessed 1 September 2004]; the Asociación de ex Detenidos Desaparecidos, <http://www.exdesaparecidos.org.ar> [accessed 1 September 2004], among others. For a full list of Argentine and international human rights organisations with URLs, see <http://www.memoriaabierta.org.ar/memoria/enlaces.htm> [accessed 1 September 2004].

[55] For example, the bulletin of the Asociación de ex Detenidos Desaparecidos, <http://ar.groups.yahoo.com/group/boletinaedd> [accessed 1 September 2004].

[56] 'The Vanished Gallery', <http://www.yendor.com/vanished/s-index.html>, [accessed 17 September 2004].

[57] Andreas Huyssen, 'Monuments and Holocaust Memory in a Media Age', in *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 249-60.

[58] Young, p. 4.

[59] Nora, p. 12.

referent in reality; or, rather, they are their own referent: pure, exclusively self-referential signs'.[60] Clearly digital projects share this concern with the presence of the referent, or lack of it. Doubts about the consequences of the memorial are exacerbated in the digital arena, where, Huyssen claims, 'The struggle for memory is ultimately also a struggle for history and against high-tech amnesia.'[61] We are faced with the possibility, according to powerful voices within the field of cultural studies, of our attempts at memory actually having the opposite effect, and promoting forgetfulness.

Memorialization is not universally condemned, however. Marita Sturken names many forms of cultural memory, which she defines as 'memory that is shared outside the avenues of formal historical discourse yet is entangled with cultural products and imbued with cultural meaning.'[62] She also focuses on the importance of images in cultural memory. Web sites may form part of the 'technologies of memory' which are created in active processes of remembrance, and are likely to play an increasingly large role in collective memory.[63] This viewpoint is of course in contrast to Richard's condemnation of new media such as television as one of the 'technologies of forgetting', a conflict which exemplifies just how ambiguous these media may appear.[64]

This debate is particularly relevant to the use of images in memorials. According to Walter Benjamin, writing in the pre-digital era, 'Every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its own concerns, threatens to disappear irretrievably.'[65] His comments remain pertinent today, as 'Desaparecidos' and 'Sin Olvido' adapt the aging images of the disappeared, keeping their relevance in the digital age and widening their possible audience. Zelizer, in a discussion of the complexities of photographs of Holocaust atrocities, calls such images 'vehicles of collective memory'

---

[60] Nora, p. 23.

[61] Huyssen, *Twilight Memories*, p. 5.

[62] Sturken, *Tangled Memories* p. 3.

[63] Incidentally, two of the memorials on which Sturken focuses, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the AIDS quilt, now have digital versions on the World Wide Web. See The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall Page, <http://thewall-usa.com> [accessed 25 September 2004] and The AIDS Memorial Quilt, <http://aidsquilt.org> [accessed 25 September 2004].

[64] Richard, p. 31.

[65] Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Shocken, 1969), pp. 253-64 (p. 255).

and explains the concerns surrounding their use. She notes that Holocaust images have had deep and lasting effects on many viewers, but that their widespread presence and the frequency of reproduction may eventually dull this impact. Despite her use of the term 'vehicles of memory' she is in agreement with Marita Sturken that images are not passive receptacles of memory but mediate and possibly even construct it. She reminds us that, 'we do not yet fully understand how images help us to remember, particularly in circumstances we did not experience personally'.[66] As the gap of time since the Holocaust and, indeed, the Argentine dictatorship widens, this becomes a more pressing theme. Many people who visit the web sites discussed here, even if they are Argentine, will not have personally experienced the period of state repression that took place from 1976 to 1983. Yet we still speak of remembering such atrocities, by which we seem to mean that the knowledge of them is transmitted and remains in active awareness in society.

It is clear, then, that the functions and effects of digital images in web sites about the disappeared are complex. They need not be characterized as totally 'new' or as part of an unprecedented rupture from all previous forms of representation, because this is simply not the case. The appearance and use of digital images are developed within a tradition of analogue photographs, just as online memorials are set up following an awareness of traditional, physical sites of memory, and it would be inaccurate to ignore this in analysing them. It is equally true, however, that digital images are not the same as previous photographic images. They make use of technology which raises new issues as it continues its rapid development. They are placed in an ever-changing, unfinished network of other web sites within which questions of referentiality and truth are as yet not fully answered. The promiscuity of photographs will certainly not be lessened as their ability to be copied and reproduced becomes ever easier, but faith in them has not altogether been lost. For now, the uneasy balance between the messages of tradition and innovation must be maintained. In Argentina, this leads to the realization that, as ever, the legacy of the dictatorship is a complex and conflicting arena of remembrance, which

---

[66] Zelizer, p. 2.

becomes even more complex, as we will see, when we take into account perpetrator images.

Images of Military Perpetrators in (Post-)Dictatorship Argentina

The 'Dirty War' has frequently been described as the darkest period in Argentine history. Highlighting its *darkness* gives the impression of events that were not only terrible but hidden, invisible or difficult to see. The military regime created a pervasive climate of fear in which turning away from acts of abuse became the norm. Even during the process of redemocratization and despite the uncovering of widespread torture and killings, Argentine society developed a selective memory as far as the causes and consequences of state terrorism were concerned. The process of remembering this era is deeply connected to looking again at its events, or in some cases looking for the first time. If it is still widely accepted that the population as a whole lived in ignorance of the reality of the dictatorship, whose memories we are talking about? How do we deal with them now? Bringing the presence of perpetrators who have not been punished for their crimes into the open and making them visible may be a way of healing the wounds of the past, but it also raises thorny questions about responsibility, complicity, and the imperative to remember in order to avoid similar occurrences in the future. This chapter will study images of military figures as a means of exploring what was visible and invisible during the dictatorship, and the importance of looking in the course of working through the past.

The Vision of the Military

It has been frequently observed that the Argentine armed forces saw themselves as protectors of the nation, as superior to ordinary civilians, and as having a duty to uphold the traditional values of the country. These tendencies developed for various reasons, and their causes can be traced back to an earlier period in Argentine history.[1] Firstly, the professionalization of the armed forces in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, combined with the foundation of military schools, lead members of the military to see themselves as separate from and superior to the civilian population. Then

---

[1] See for example Hilda López Laval, *Autoritarismo y cultura: Argentina 1976-1983* (Madrid: Espiral Hispano Americana, 1995); Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2002); Patricia Marchak, *God's Assassins: State Terrorism in Argentina in the 1970s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), pp. 43-55.

a military coup in 1930 was upheld by the Supreme Court, which ruled that the armed forces could oust a democratically elected government to maintain stability, setting a precedent for subsequent interventions. Military sociologist Alain Rouquié dates the militarization of Argentine society from this time, and has explained that the weakness of civil institutions also contributed to the persistent interference of the military into political life.[2] Soldiers tended to be strongly nationalist, conservative and Catholic, believing in their role as 'saviours' of the nation rather than the importance of representative democracy. There was a tendency, therefore, for the military to stress its masculinity, Christianity, and responsibility to the country in its self-presentation.

The coup d'état of 1976 was the sixth of the twentieth century, and took place among an unsurprised population accustomed to military intervention in government and tired of the incompetence of President Isabel Perón. The generals were clearly continuing a tradition, which they saw as an obligation, to provide firm rule during a period of increasing political violence, erratic leadership and economic weakness. In fact the coup was widely welcomed in the general population. The media reported the news with relief, and prominent figures such as author Jorge Luis Borges spoke openly of their support for the junta.[3]

Despite the welcoming reaction, there had been previous indications of the escalating repression that was to come. In 1975 it was reported that General Jorge Rafael Videla, commander in chief of the Army and future *de facto* President, stated, 'In order to guarantee the security of the state, all the necessary people will die.'[4] At this time, too, the definition of a 'subversive' was widened to include anyone who opposed the status quo in any way, either practically (the small group of guerrilla fighters) or ideologically. In the military's view, subversives were excluded from citizenship and no longer

---

[2] Alain Rouquié, 'Hegemonía militar, estado y dominación social', in *Argentina, Hoy* (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno, 1982), pp. 11-51.
[3] Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 6-7.
[4] Quoted in Rita Arditti, *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina* (London: University of California Press, 1999), p. 7.

considered Argentine.[5] Despite this, the junta nonetheless continued to present themselves outwardly as civilized moderates taking control of a troubled country; as 'gentlemen', as Borges famously described them.[6] The media were compliant, tending to support the current administration, and the majority of the people seemed prepared to accept such a view.

Diana Taylor focuses on the importance of public spectacle in creating a national community and identity, exploring the performative quality of military rule and the response by opposing groups such as the Madres de Plaza de Mayo.[7] She traces the history of the military's tendency to present itself as supremely masculine while feminizing and infantilizing the rest of the population.[8] Taylor notes that, 'Individual and state formation take place, in part, in the visual sphere through a complicated play of looks: looking, being looked at, identification, recognition, mimicry.'[9] She also identifies the process of complicit, frightened or deliberate turning away from events that she calls 'percepticide'.[10] In this way she underlines the importance of the visual in the spectacle of dictatorship. While Taylor's study concentrates on the 'theatricality' of the junta's rule, including their speeches, their appearances in the media, monopoly of public space, and cultural productions of the time, these multiple looks are highly significant to a consideration of photography of the period.[11] In accordance with Taylor's examination of the 'performativity' of the period of state terrorism, Marguerite Feitlowitz calls the speeches given by the junta 'pure theatre' which took place while 'offstage', people were disappearing.[12] Languages, in the forms of speeches, official

---

[5] Feitlowitz, p. 24.

[6] Ibid., p. 6.

[7] Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997)

[8] 'The infantilization and feminization of victims and the concomitant hypermasculization and consequent depersonalization of perpetrators' is a tendency also found in representations of the Holocaust, according to Marianne Hirsch, 'Nazi Photographs in Post-Holocaust Art: Gender as an Idiom of Memorialization', in *Phototextualities: Intersections of Photography and Narrative*, ed. by Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), pp. 19-40 (p. 22).

[9] Taylor, p. 30.

[10] Ibid., p. 119.

[11] Taylor's use of 'a play of looks' is influenced by the work of Marianne Hirsch. See Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

[12] Feitlowitz, p. 28.

pronouncements, and media reports, existed to conceal the true actions and intentions of the regime and instil guilt, terror and confusion in the general population.[13] Potential opponents, the so-called subversives, were demonized, while the armed forces were portrayed as strong, worthy, and in control. This chapter will take Taylor's notions of performativity, and of 'percepticide', to explore images of perpetrators both during and, importantly, after the dictatorship.[14] What kind of self-image did the junta perpetuate, and to what extent could they control it? What values did they prize? And how has their self-presentation continued to affect a democratic society?

There can be no doubt that the Argentine junta were skilled media manipulators, and they paid careful attention to their self-image. They had learnt from the international condemnation of the overt violence of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, and had no intention of committing such public atrocities, nor were they interested in emulating his personality cult.[15] This is why, despite internal rivalries, they were careful to divide up duties and government roles more or less equally between the three branches of the armed forces. Consequently, rather than emphasizing the individuals in the junta, they focused on presenting a united front and disseminating the military values of male order, discipline, protection, and adherence to a strict hierarchy. They set up a visual act which distracted attention from the sinister events occurring under the surface. This is nowhere better symbolized than in an image which has been widely circulated and is still frequently reproduced in publications about the period of state terrorism, its iconicity stemming from its seemingly perfect example of the military's self-presentation.

This image (figure 10) shows the leaders of the first junta, Videla, Massera, and Agosti, at a military parade. The foreground of the image is orderly, with the three military figures filling the frame. Videla, the tallest and ultimately most powerful member, is in the centre, flanked by the Massera on the left and Agosti on the right, who are of similar heights. All three are in full military uniform, although Videla was often seen in a

---

[13] Taylor, p. 20.

[14] 'Perpetrator images', in this context, will refer to images featuring perpetrators, rather than images of victims taken by perpetrators.

[15] John Simpson and Jana Bennett, *The Disappeared: The Chilling Story of Argentina's "Dirty War"* (London: Sphere, 1986), p. 62.

civilian suit in his role as President. He is displaying his medals and wearing a sash in the colours of the Argentine flag. Directly behind the front row of officials two middle-aged women with carefully arranged hair are visible. They are presumably the wives of military officers. They are wearing sunglasses and one of them has turned away from the camera and the fly-over at which all the other subjects are gazing.[16] Further back, and out of focus, other uniformed figures can be seen staring upwards at the aeroplanes which are out of sight.

Figure 10.

In some ways this seems a straightforward image, containing such clear symbols of military authority as the uniforms, insignia and medals. The state is represented by the sashes based on the national flag worn by Videla and Agosti. The expressions of the three men in the foreground are controlled yet open. Their upward gaze gives them a rather wide-eyed expression which is serious but far from fierce or cruel. Although they are backed up by a crowd, it is not entirely orderly and seems relaxed. We might speculate that the junta leaders would approve of such an image of themselves, as it corresponds to their label as 'gentlemen' and their fatherly control of the country.

Facing the camera squarely, the principal figures certainly appear to conform to the junta's promotion of the armed forces as masculine, upright, and authoritative, 'the mechanical display of rigid, controlled male bodies against which the leader(s) stood

---

[16] Taylor, p. 68.

tall'.[17] Rather than looking at the camera, they are looking past and above it, indicating that they are being watched but not, at this moment, watching either their subordinates or the general population. Taylor suggests that they give the impression that 'their attention was transfixed on lofty, transcendent goals'.[18] She also contrasts the focused attitude of the generals with the disorderly background scene. It is significant that the secondary characters in this image are women rather than lower ranking military officials, who are further back still. Three women's heads are clearly visible. From their appearance, we could imagine that the women are some of the upper and upper-middle class wives whose traditional attitudes to home, family, religion and work were important in the junta's championing of 'Western and Christian' values. Such women are pictured in stark contrast to 'Las Locas de la Plaza' (the crazy women of the square), as the Madres de Plaza de Mayo were initially, mockingly, called by the regime. They also avoid looking at the camera, however, staring fixedly into the sky with their eyes invisible behind their dark glasses.

Yet there is more at stake here than the military elite watching aeroplanes, as they are themselves also observed. The situation, with the air force displaying its aeroplanes and the generals united and so carefully presented, is clearly a media event. Marguerite Feitlowitz interviewed the photographer in this case, the late Guillermo Loiácono. Despite his privileged access to military occasions, Loiácono actually opposed the dictatorship and eventually created, in Feitlowitz's words, 'a photography of resistance'.[19] Loiácono said,

> We did so much political photography for the simple reason that it never occurred to the military that we would use the medium to express opposition. They never deciphered our language. [...] In the first months of 1978, when the junta saw our pictures in *Paris Match* or *Stern*, it assumed they were taken by foreigners as part of the so-called 'Anti-Argentine campaign'.[20]

---

[17] Ibid., p. 61.
[18] Ibid., p. 68.
[19] Feitlowitz, p. 161.
[20] Ibid., p. 161. Feitlowitz notes that many of Loiácono's photographs were published anonymously or under a pseudonym in Europe and Brazil.

The opposition in this image is certainly subtle as, superficially, it appears to tally perfectly with the generals' performance as 'gentlemen' and controllers of power. There are nonetheless warning signs in their distracted gaze and the disorganization of the remaining figures. Loiácono's point reminds us that while they could control and terrorize the civilian population, even a military government cannot maintain complete and permanent control over the meanings of the images that circulate during and after its regime. An image which at first sight supports all the aims of the junta's publicity machine may later be used to very different effect to illustrate the duplicity of the dictatorship. The shifts in significance which this image invariably undergoes demonstrate the fluidity and instability of photographic meaning.

Indeed, it is difficult to view this image now without thinking of the actions of the regime at this time and of its unseen victims. However, it is frequently used as it is in Feitlowitz's *A Lexicon of Terror*, where it is cropped slightly more closely than in the Taylor, purely to illustrate the introduction of the junta leaders.[21] An almost identical print by the same photographer, but taken a few seconds earlier or later, appears for the same purpose in Simpson and Bennett's *The Disappeared*. (The generals look exactly the same but the face of the woman in the background is in profile rather than looking over her shoulder as in the other shot.)[22] It is certainly a useful illustration as it shows the three junta leaders together and with their faces pictured clearly. Using the caption 'Unholy Trinity', however, as Diana Taylor does, gives us a different perspective on these 'benevolent' leaders.[23] The religious reference is also a reminder that Catholic services were part of the generals' self-representation as respectable, devout individuals, and that the Catholic hierarchy in Argentina for the most part supported the military regime.

One aspect of the regime which was repeatedly emphasized was the hypermasculinity of military males. While Loiácono's image shows the identified leaders of the junta, a photograph taken by Eduardo Longoni of non-commissioned officers of the army in

---

[21] Feitlowitz, p. 7.

[22] This image appears in the unnumbered pages of the illustrations section of Simpson and Bennett.

[23] Taylor, p. 68.

1981 shows a mass of uniformed bodies and nondescript faces with no background or free space visible at all (figure 11). The impression is of a continuing number of minor authority figures with as many as possible packed into the frame but also spilling out beyond it. As the junta did not seek to impose their own personalities so much as their collective policies on the nation, so the individual personalities of the soldier are subsumed into their collective, military identity. The bodies are in profile but their heads are turned toward the camera as if their attention has suddenly been called to it. The group of faces look almost unnaturally alike: some of the men are clean-shaven but many have identical small, dark moustaches in imitation of Videla's and none are smiling. They are indistinguishable from each other and their identity seems created by the uniform they are wearing. The soldiers' collective stare, which shows no trace of softness, contrasts with the distracted gaze of the junta in the previous image, who do not look toward the photographer. Here agents of national surveillance are keenly attentive to their surroundings and obviously on duty, even though they are not formed into the strict rows of a military parade. Even so, the overt presence of soldiers in uniform does not reflect the existence of military task force operations, where kidnapping and murders took place, with perpetrators dressed in plain clothes and driving unmarked cars. The openness shown here is only half of the reality of military duties in Argentina at this time, where real fear was inspired by servicemen without uniforms to identify them.

The military's self-representation was based on a series of binary oppositions and upheld by:

> A complicated play of looks marked lines and degrees of inclusion and exclusion – the junta kept an eye on the military even as the common soldier looked up to it; members of the population might find themselves more comfortable functioning as an undifferentiated audience than being singled out as objects of the military gaze.[24]

---

[24] Taylor, p. 71.

Figure 11.

The armed forces were presented as the embodiment of masculinity, as displayed by their uniforms, their positions of authority and discipline, their stern expressions and body language, their speech and their domination of public space. This is exhibited in opposition to the nation, which is presented as feminine (*la Patria*) and the feminization of opponents.[25] Parents were warned, for example, that long hair on male children could be an indication of subversive tendencies.[26] Female enemies were also ridiculed; Isabel Perón was presented as weak, hysterical and idiotic, while Margaret Thatcher was shown as an aggressive, delusional, castrating woman.[27] The Madres de Plaza de Mayo were marginalized as women, whose place was in the home, as subversive, and as mentally unstable.[28]

---

[25] Ibid., p. 38.

[26] Ibid., p. 105-06.

[27] Ibid., p54-57, 77.

[28] Another significant metaphor in use at this time was that of the health of the nation, and presentation of enemies as mad or dirty. Feitlowitz has noted in her analysis of the junta's pronouncements that the country was said to be diseased and in need of surgery, or medication, which would be provided by the armed forces; *A Lexicon of Terror*, p. 33. Roniger and Sznajder also remark on the 'medicalized discourse' in Argentine politics; Luis Roniger and Mario Sznajder, *The Legacy of Human Rights Violations in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile and Uruguay* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 37.

Military Violence – Seen and not Seen

At the same time as the acceptable exterior of the Argentine regime was being shown to the civilian population and the world, violence was growing away from the public gaze. It would be tempting to say that it took place out of sight, but that would not be completely accurate. As I have already stated, there were some hints from the junta about how repressive their policies would be. When kidnappings and political murders started taking place at an alarming rate, it is true that they were rarely reported accurately in the mainstream press. Journalists were stifled by a mixture of official censorship and self-censorship induced by fear, complicity, or economic interests. Murdered prisoners were often described as 'armed subversives' or 'terrorists' and it was claimed that they died in gun battles with security forces. Other incidents were simply not reported at all. The Madres de Plaza de Mayo also received very little coverage until near the end of the dictatorship.[29]

However, some evidence of repression was visible; indeed, the logic of state repression was predicated on a degree of visibility. Many 'disappearances' took place in the day, at places of work, in the street, or in the home, with multiple witnesses.[30] Diana Taylor includes images of soldiers dragging civilians from public places.[31] Sometimes a military operation would involve the sealing off of an entire area, in which the police would then refuse to respond to emergency calls. Bodies that had been dumped in the River Plate estuary were sometimes found on popular beaches in Argentina and neighbouring Uruguay, and the corpse of one suspected subversive was even left underneath the Obelisk, one of the main landmarks of central Buenos Aires.[32] Residents near certain clandestine detention centres were kept awake at night by screams from

---

[29] For a consideration of the printed media during the dictatorship, see Osvaldo Bayer, 'Pequeño recordatorio para un país sin memoria', in *Represión y reconstrucción de una cultura: el caso argentino*, ed. by Saúl Sosnowski (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1988), pp. 203-23; Luis Gregorich, 'Literatura. Una descripción del campo: narrativa, periodismo, ideología', in *Represión y reconstrucción de una cultura: el caso argentino*, ed. by Saúl Sosnowski (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1988), pp. 109-24; Jerry W. Knudson, 'Veil of Silence: The Argentine Press and the Dirty War, 1976-1983', *Latin American Perspectives*, 24 (1997), 93-112; Simpson and Bennett, pp. 193-228.
[30] Lewis, pp. 150-51.
[31] Taylor, p. 102.
[32] Bennett and Simpson, p. 97.

behind the walls. Some areas of the media, notably Jacobo Timerman's *La Opinión* and the English-language *Buenos Aires Herald*, did print news stories about disappearances.[33] During and after the 1978 Football World Championships, international news media were highly critical of the regime.

It was not that there was *nothing* to see, although an accurate overview of events in the late 1970s would have been difficult to gain from within Argentina. Rather, most people made a great effort not to see, or to look away as quickly as possible. When she interviewed Argentines about their experiences during the dictatorship, Feitlowitz was fascinated by the way in which immediate denials of knowledge of state terrorism suddenly turned into memories of kidnappings, threats, or military violence.[34] The culture of fear instilled by the military regime had made Argentines 'too terrorized to look each other in the face'.[35] Marguerite Guzmán Bouvard, in her history of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, notes that,

> Among those who witnessed the abductions were those who closed their windows or turned up their radios to mask the screaming, pretending that they had seen nothing and trying to distance themselves from such a terrible reality. In the staged display of the abductions, however, everyone was required to be aware and present, to realize that whether one was abducted or not was merely a matter of chance.[36]

In fact, a dim realization of the existence of state violence and kidnappings was essential to the creation of the generalized terror which the junta used to control the population. Of course, torture did take place behind closed doors in secret detention centres and there remains little evidence of it other than accounts of survivors and confessions by repressors. There are few visual remains of the most sinister practices of the regime.[37] Nevertheless, it was a combination of fear, indifference and complicity, in some quarters, that led to Argentines turning away from repressive actions on their own doorsteps. Naturally the consequences of this are lingering feelings of guilt,

---

[33] Bennett and Simpson, pp. 218-28.
[34] Feitlowitz, p. 151.
[35] Ibid., p. 192.
[36] Marguerite Guzmán Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994), p. 28.
[37] Although some recent cultural productions have dealt with the subject of torture during the 'Dirty War' in graphic and moving ways, for example the film *Garage Olimpo* Dir. Marco Bechis. 1999.

justifications, denials, and confessions which all effect the way in which the period of state terrorism is remembered.

Democratization – Examining the Past

Following the fall of the military regime in 1983, the long process of redemocratization was initiated. The new democratically-elected President Raúl Alfonsín had to control a sensitive balancing act between the demands of human rights organizations and victims' relatives, the concerns of ordinary citizens, and the ongoing pressure of the armed forces who threatened to oust him from power on several occasions. CONADEP, the commission which investigated disappearances, brought shocking information into the public sphere and collected a list of disappeared persons. However, CONADEP's powers were weaker than many had called for, and it did not have the time or legal backing to complete a full examination of state terrorism. With hindsight, the Madres now claim that the investigation was a distraction to cover the absence of a parliamentary commission with legal powers to compel the military to testify.[38] While many onlookers praised the very existence of a commission and the trials of the junta leaders, some, including Julie Taylor, assert that the *Nunca Más* report and the trials failed to restore justice in Argentina.[39] Carina Perelli concurs with this view, comparing the trials to 'Nüremberg without denazification'.[40]

As Perelli's comment suggests, one issue which proved particularly problematic was the continuing influence of the military in civilian institutions, and the failure to bring to justice most of the torturers and military leaders. Investigations had never really looked below the surface of the regime. The result was 'an incomplete democracy in which institutionalized violence remained a serious problem and vast sectors of the population

---

[38] Jo Fisher, *Mothers of the Disappeared* (London: Zed, 1989), pp. 130-31.
[39] Julie Taylor, 'Body Memories: Aide-Memoires and Collective Amnesia in the Wake of the Argentine Terror', in *Body Politics: Disease, Desire, and the Family*, ed. by Michael Ryan and Avery Gordon (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), pp. 192-203.
[40] Carina Perelli, 'Memoria de sangre: Fear, Hope, and Disenchantment in Argentina', in *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace*, ed. by Jonathan Boyarin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), pp. 39-66 (p. 58).

remained vulnerable to abuses by the state'.[41] Under President Carlos Menem the culture of impunity was strengthened as those members of the military who had been convicted were pardoned and freed, a move which met with wide opposion.[42] He urged the country to look ahead rather than behind and even warned protesters against the 'exaggerated use of liberty' which could lead to 'another contingent of the Plaza de Mayo demanding their children'. [43] In the early 1990s, consideration of the period of state terrorism had lulled, but the wounds had not healed.

Re-seeing perpetrators

In 1995, after more than a decade of democracy, Retired Navy Captain Adolfo Scilingo confessed his part in the flights which took place during the dictatorship, when drugged and bound prisoners were thrown from aeroplanes into the sea.[44] Although this information was not new, its admission by a Navy officer created a sensation, and several other members of the military came forward to support the claims. Parts of Scilingo's interviews with prominent Argentine journalist Horacio Verbitsky were televised, bringing an ex-agent of repression – although Scilingo insisted he had never personally tortured – dramatically into the public vision. This use of electronic media was unprecedented; although the trials of the junta were filmed, only short clips were broadcast without sound on the television news.[45] This reawakened interest in the events of the dictatorship and its consequences, including the whereabouts of the former torturers.

Since then, much memory work has been done concerning the legacy of state terrorism, by human rights organizations, relatives of the disappeared, writers and artists. The

---

[41] Martín Abregú, 'Human Rights after the Dictatorship: Lessons from Argentina', in *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 34, 2000, 12-18 (p. 13).

[42] Fisher, p. 137.

[43] Taylor, p. 15.

[44] Verbitsky's interviews with Scilingo were published in Spanish as *El Vuelo* (Buenos Aires: Planeta-Espejo de la Argentina, 1995) and in English as *The Flight: Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior*, trans. by Esther Allen (New York: New Press, 1996).

[45] Extended scenes of the trial were seen by most Argentines for the first time in 2004 in the documentary film, *El Nuremberg argentino*, (Dir. Miguel Rodríguez Arias. Argentina. 2002) although this was still heavily edited.

majority of this, however, has focused on the disappeared themselves, and on groups like the Madres, with relatively little attention paid to the repressors. There have been further confessions by those involved in the repression, although these have been relatively few.[46] In addition, legal processes have continued to explore ways of prosecuting the junta leaders and other torturers. In 2001 the *Punto Final* (Full Stop) and *Obediencia Debida* (Due Obedience) laws, which granted immunity for crimes committed under the military regime, were declared unconstitutional, and since then there have been new moves in Argentine courts to prosecute former junta leaders and lower-ranking officers. These cases, however, have been developing very slowly and it remains to be seen whether the aging generals will ever face trial.

Thus some attention has focused on the military in the news and legal arena, but many Argentines are still concerned by the culture of impunity in the country and, as mentioned above, most cultural productions have been more concerned with the victims.[47] This is one reason why the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, led by Hebe Bonafini, one of the most radical human rights groups, rejects attempts to commemorate the disappeared. The Madres continue symbolically to insist that their children are alive because their killers have never been fully identified and punished.[48] Similarly, they refuse reparations (because to accept them would mean admitting that their children were dead), oppose exhumations, and take no part in the creation of memorials.[49] While the Madres will never forget their children, they also refuse to ignore the presence of perpetrators in Argentine society, and their controversial stance is an attempt to redress the balance in favour of exposing them.

If the perpetration of terror, clandestine imprisonment and torture was founded on a murky world of fears and secrecy, its exposure is an important, but ethically problematic, step in working through the legacy of the dictatorship. There have been

---

[46] The most recent confession was made by Lieutenant Colonel Bruno Laborda. 'Confesión de un militar: una jueza citaría a declarar a otros oficiales', *Clarín*, 6 June 2004, <http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/06/10/elpais/p-01401.htm> [accessed 23 August 2004].

[47] Abregú, pp. 12-13.

[48] Fisher, p. 128.

[49] Guzmán Bouvard, pp. 141-53.

initiatives by various groups to make visible the torturers and military leaders, and these have often been connected to the use of the photographic image. In reaction to the official silence imposed over years, even during democratic government, artists and activists have pushed images of perpetrators into the public eye in a way which raises questions about the process of remembering, commemorating, and achieving justice in Argentina. How do such images compare with images produced during the dictatorship, and what is to be gained by looking at them now? To try to answer these questions we can turn again to the presence of the 'Dirty War' in cyberspace. The 'Desaparecidos' web site balances its 'Memory Wall' of the disappeared with another section devoted to 'repressors' and 'collaborators'.[50] The section is entered by clicking on a paragraph of text which reads, 'Genocidas: los torturadores, los asesinos, los ladrones de niños, los que gozan la impunidad. Sabé quienes son. A lo mejor reconocés a un conocido.'[51] ('Murderers: torturers, murderers, kidnappers, those who benefit from impunity. Know who they are. You might even recognize someone you know.') When the mouse is rolled over this text the word 'Justicia' (justice) flashes up in large lettering. The section is also represented by the icon of a skull wearing a helmet in the style of the Argentine soldiers, and the word 'Represor'.

Figure 12.

---

[50] 'Represores, Torturadores y Asesinos Argentinos', <http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/tort/> [accessed 23 August 2004].

[51] 'Proyecto Desaparecidos en Argentina', <http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/> [accessed 23 August 2004].

The repressors' page contains several rows of small square photographic image, clearly digital images created from scanned photographs. To judge by the grainy quality, some of them may have been scanned from images in newspapers or photocopies. Most are in black and white but a few are in colour, and in two cases the web designer has apparently been unable to find a photograph and has used the icon of the military skull. Each photograph is labelled with its subject's surname and when clicked on, takes the user to further information about the perpetrator illustrated. The page also links to a list of perpetrators in Argentine human rights abuses between 1976 and 1983. This reminds us that, like the images of the disappeared, many are not pictured. Just seventeen 'repressors' are featured, and three 'collaborators', whereas the list publicized by the activists Grupo Fahrenheit contains hundreds of names.[52] This sample of torturers, therefore, focuses partly on the individual personalities it portrays, but at the same time is meant to represent all the members of the Argentine security forces involved in the repression. In this sense the arbitrary selection of some candidates for exposure is problematic, in the same way that the choice of images of *desaparecidos* for marches and campaigns may elide their individuality.

On one level, the layout and appearance of these images are similar to those of the disappeared on the same web site. They are also reminiscent of the 'Gallery of Repressors' which featured in the Madres de Plaza de Mayo's own newspaper in the 1980s.[53] It is noticeable, however, that all the perpetrators are middle-aged or elderly men and some of them are wearing military uniform, including the hats that are parodied in the icon. The use of colour swiftly reminds the viewer that the images are more recent than the identity card photographs of the memorial to the disappeared. The age of the subjects also contrasts with the predominantly young faces of the missing, reminding us that while the military are aging, those they killed have not had a chance to grow old. While images of the disappeared are frozen in time, then, images of their perpetrators

[52] Grupo Fahrenheit, 'Listado Alfabético de Represores', 1998, <http://www.desaparecidos.org/GrupoF/>, [accessed 23 August 2004].
[53] Guzmán Bouvard, p. 137.

are part of a changing situation; one which is, nevertheless, connected to the memory of a society and a period in history.

The use of images of the disappeared has been significant for its role in remembering and proclaiming their existence, but the tendency to display a small range of pictures symbolically has also been disputed. There are aspects to the display of military perpetrators which make it an even more controversial act than the presentation of images of disappeared persons. This web site contains pictures of the disappeared together with their dates of disappearance and tributes from loved ones. Some of the information given about the subjects of these images includes addresses, telephone numbers, and even maps indicating the location of the person's home. What is the anonymous visitor in cyberspace, who could be anywhere in the world and hold any view about what he or she is reading, supposed to do with this knowledge? Clearly such information exposes the person, and possibly their family as well, and could be taken as an invitation to further action. Most of these perpetrators have been convicted of crimes including torture, kidnap of babies, theft and murder, but were later pardoned, and legal proceedings would have been brought against others if it had not been for the laws of *Punto Final* and *Obediencia Debida*. On the one hand, showing images and publishing personal information about members or former members of the security forces takes a stand against the culture of impunity in Argentina. On the other, there must be concerns about the ethics of such a move, the need to uphold the law, the safety of innocent people and the possibility of mistaken identity. It is worth noting that not all the information on the 'Desaparecidos' web site is accurate and up to date. For example, it gives the home address and telephone number of former Buenos Aires Police Commissioner Miguel Osvaldo Etchecolatz, after correctly listing the crimes for which he was convicted but later released under the law of *Obediencia Debida*, and gives the impression that he is living freely, which was no doubt the case when this profile was written. However, Etchecolatz was sentenced to a further 7 years in prison in March 2004 for his role in the kidnapping and illegal adoption of babies born to people

murdered during the 'Dirty War'.[54] If such sensitive information, which could encourage people to take extreme actions, is to be displayed in such a widely accessible and unregulated sphere as the World Wide Web, it seems vital that it is kept correctly updated. In addition, awareness of such oversights reduces confidence in the rest of the information shared in this forum.

The work of 'Desaparecidos' is reminiscent not only of memorial efforts by various groups, but also of the more extreme protests of organizations such as H.I.J.O.S., Hijos por la Identidad y la Justicia contra el Olvido y el Silencio (Children for Identity and Justice against Forgetting and Silence), which is formed of the offspring of the disappeared. H.I.J.O.S. has become notorious for conducting *escraches*, a particular form of protest which generally takes place outside the homes of former members of the armed forces.[55] Activists gather outside the house or apartment and alert the neighbourhood to the presence of a 'repressor' by conducting a noisy demonstration and painting warnings on the walls and pavements.[56] Some people oppose the damaging of property and disturbance which results, but for others, this is hardly comparable to the serious crimes of which the 'repressor' is accused. Members of H.I.J.O.S. make public and visible the presence of torturers and generals in an attempt to ensure that they are remembered, and hopefully to make them unwelcome in their own neighbourhood. They may hand out fliers showing images of the perpetrators. Exposing the torturers' faces is a key aim of the *escrache*, because 'Once their faces are known they are restricted to the spaces where they can circulate without being harassed'.[57] Susana Kaiser describes *escraches* as a means of communication; the exposure both makes life uncomfortable for the perpetrator, and forces the general public to acknowledge that murderers and torturers are still living in their midst. Noise, disruption, publicity, and awareness make denial more difficult. It is one thing to stage a local demonstration, even in the contested public space of Argentina, but another to perform an electronic *escrache* to an

---

[54] Elliot Gotkine, 'Argentines Jailed for Baby Theft', *BBC News*, 30 March 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/americas/3581075.stm> [accessed 23 August 2004].

[55] 'Escrache' comes from the verb *escrachar*, Argentine slang meaning 'to uncover'.

[56] See Susana Kaiser, '*Escraches:* demonstrations, communication and political memory in post-dictatorial Argentina', *Media, Culture and Society*, 24, 2002, 499-516.

[57] Ibid., p. 507.

international audience. Portraits on a web site do not speak, but they remain as a sort of lasting visual *escrache*, exposing the perpetrators and their crimes to spectators who search for the site, or simply stumble across it.

Conclusion

Like the *escraches*, displaying digital images of perpetrators on web sites is implicitly or explicitly connected to remembering state terrorism and its victims, and achieving justice. The concepts of memory and justice have become entwined in the legacy of the Argentine dictatorship, and many would concur with Yerushalmi's suggestion, '¿Es posible que el antónimo de "el olvido" no sea "la memoria" sino *la justicia?*'[58] ('Is it possible that the opposite of "forgetting" is not "memory" but "justice"?') During the dictatorship many citizens lived by implicit rules about what they looked at or looked away from. Since then, the failure of the state to bring military killers and torturers to justice has been connected with its willingness to ignore the past and its legacy. Now, efforts are being made to look again at this painful period of Argentina's history. Remembering the victims cannot be separated from concern about the criminals who, in many cases, are still free. Making perpetrators and their crimes visible in society is a significant gesture towards rectifying this situation, and reminds everyone that the legacy of the 'Dirty War' will not fade away unresolved. Yet there is much at stake in taking such a stance, as it involves not only those directly affected, such as survivors, relatives, and members of the armed forces, but the whole of society. In looking, each citizen considers his or her own responsibility in the process of remembering.

Recently, this point was made in dramatic fashion by the discovery of photographic images of torture sessions which took place in 1986 during the Presidency of Raúl Alfonsín. One of these, which was published in the major Buenos Aires daily, *Clarín*, is a shocking image of a near-naked man, who is strapped down and also being held by

---

[58] Josef Hayim Yerushalmi, 'Reflexiones sobre el olvido', in *Usos del Olvido* (Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión, 1988), pp. 13-26 (p. 26).

several other men, while the *picana*, an electric cattle prod, is pointed at his genitals.[59] His face is partly covered but the lower half of it is visible and his mouth is wide open in a cry of agony. The Army confirmed that the images were taken as part of a 'training course' in a 'prison camp' which operated until 1994, and an immediate investigation was ordered by President Néstor Kirchner. Kirchner has made strenuous efforts to improve the human rights situation in the country, but this incident will not have helped to heal the scars of the dictatorship. The news that torture continued under a democratic government may not have astonished the more experienced human rights investigators, but it will have shocked many, and the sight of such explicit images will have been a stark reminder of the events of the 'Dirty War'. Yet again, Argentines will have been reminded of the weaknesses of their democratic system and the stubborn attitudes of the armed forces. After many years when even most fictional representations of state terrorism shied away from the depiction of torture, the sight of such an image speaks strongly to the need to continue the examination of Argentina's troubled past. The image, with its burden of truth, may combat any residues of denial about the existence of torture, but will raise further questions about the prosecutions of perpetrators. This picture has come to light, but for the most part, the faces of torturers remain in darkness.

---

[59] 'Revelan casos de torturas cuando entrenaban a comandos militares', *Clarín*, 16 January 2004, <http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/01/16/p-01201.htm> [accessed 23 August 2004].

Concluding Remarks

> The relationship of the camera image to memory and history is one of contradiction. On one hand, photographed, filmed, and videotaped images can embody and create memories; on the other hand, they have the capacity, through the power of their presence, to obliterate them.[1]

Marita Sturken explains the inherent complexity of photographic images, which have always been associated with loss and death, and yet, paradoxically, relied on as containers of memory. She notes that while images are a lasting reminder and proof of a past moment, continual exposure to images may eventually create mental pictures which replace the original memories, particularly in situations where images are circulated repeatedly in the remembrance of events of national importance.[2] There is no escape from the connection with remembering and forgetting where the photograph is concerned, but few simple conclusions to draw.

As we have seen, images are central in the struggle for memory in contemporary Argentina, yet analysis of them has been, for the most part, neglected in discussions of the legacy of the 'Dirty War'. Human rights activists, many of whom are survivors of detention centres or relatives of victims, employ photographs in their campaigns as they attempt to influence the direction of memory discourse in the nation and its struggle to come to terms with a turbulent past. The Madres de Plaza de Mayo have experienced an uneasy relationship with the images of their disappeared children, which they first employed in a cry for national and international attention. After carrying them in the early years of their organization, the Madres led by Hebe de Bonafini later rejected the display of individual artefacts and moved to a more generic rather than particularized approach to the photographic image and to their campaigns in general. The relationship between individual mother and child was overtaken by a politicized view of collective motherhood, in which the Madres represented themselves as mothers of *all* the disappeared. Photographs still have a semi-permanent presence in the Plaza de Mayo though; both those which have been arranged on large scaffolds for major

---

[1] Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (London: University of California Press, 1997), p. 20.
[2] Ibid.

demonstrations, and those held weekly by the Madres de Plaza de Mayo – Línea Fundadora. The square has, therefore, become a key setting for photographic displays. Despite this shift in significance from indexical to iconic, the Madres are still strongly associated with their key symbols, the headscarf, the photograph, and their presence in the square on Thursdays. Their central demands, for the reappearance of their children and the punishment of the 'Dirty War' criminals, are unchanged, and thus the ongoing need to bear witness remains important in the Madres' struggle. This role is, in part, fulfilled by photography, despite its shift from index to icon. The function of photography in the Madres' work is a paradoxical one, as it simultaneously provides evidence of individuals and symbolizes the fate of all the disappeared.

Just as it is important to trace the changing/shifting meanings of photography in relation to the Madres' struggle for justice, so we must also pay attention to the evolving image cultures in which images circulate. Images of the disappeared have now been deployed in new contexts, including the publications and CD-ROM of the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, and commemorative web sites. They are therefore potentially exposed to new audiences and form part of innovative ways of protesting past injustices. In particular, the web sites exploit the interactivity of the World Wide Web to involve the user in his or her exploration of the site. Here again, there is a tendency for the original, indexical value of the image to develop an iconic quality. Hundreds of images in a 'memory wall' overwhelm the viewer with the sheer number of faces, rather than the individual story of each victim, although that information is also available. Images of disappeared persons on the Internet have become symbolic of state terrorism in Argentina as well as part of the complex image culture of the twenty-first century.

And yet, any study of the photographic image in Argentine conflicts for memory must examine not only victims but also perpetrators. The web site 'Desparecidos' features a page devoted to the images of the perpetrators as well as its tribute to the victims. I have traced the self-presentation of the Argentine military during the period of state terrorism, where they focused on their self-proclaimed status as protectors and healers of the threatened nation, and as upholders of Western, Christian values. At the same time, they

relied on a network of disinformation and the dissemination of terror to maintain authority and suppress dissent. Even so, images of the regime can be analysed in a way that illustrates their fluid meanings. In the aftermath of the 'Dirty War', including the trial of the junta leaders, the military have been for the most part unrepentant and defensive of their actions.[3] In recent years, other groups have displayed images of perpetrators in an act of exposure and a call for justice. The faces of generals and torturers have been a counter to the faces of *desaparecidos*, while both point to the unfinished business of the legacy of state terrorism.

Photographs, then, appear over and over again in the sphere of memory discourse in Argentina, in exhibitions, archives, web sites, the media, and as legal evidence. As spectators we return insistently to the question of how, or whether, they help us to remember. Perhaps no simple answer is possible, as the relation between photography and memory is undeniably complex; nevertheless, some tentative conclusions are in order.

In the case of Argentina, I would argue that the circulation of photographs in the public sphere is both symptomatic of and contributes to the continued interest in the dictatorship and its legacies. Photographs, in their traditional role as visual evidence of past events, and as continuing symbols of past horrors, still confront denial of state terrorism and remind new generations of recent history. Their continuing presence is also proof of the fact that some sectors of society, at least, are prepared to examine, or re-examine, them. In a country where the military juntas themselves, and subsequent governments (with the partial exception of the administration of Alfonsín in the early 1980s) have, until recently, been reluctant to cast light on the events of the 'Dirty War', the presence of photographs is an invaluable aid in renewed attempts to do so. The images are being viewed by some, especially younger generations, for the first time, as they learn about the events in Argentina in recent decades. As Marianne Hirsch has argued, photography has a privileged status as a medium of postmemory, making it

---

[3] Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2002), p. 219, 223.

particularly significant as the children of the disappeared and their peers grow up and become involved in the discourse surrounding the state terrorism.[4] For others, including those who claimed ignorance about what was happening at the time, the images are being looked at as if for the first time, or re-examined in the light of new information. Photographic images have the power to provoke debate and trigger memories of this period, which has lasting resonance in Argentine society.

Nevertheless another question which recurs in these debates is that of the growing iconicity of such images. I would concur with Grant and Zelizer, to give two examples, that there is a tendency for the images to convey meaning symbolically, with the possibility that the indexical quality of the photograph will be lost.[5] This development may also be connected to the limited range of images which recur in multiple contexts, often with little or no further information or analysis. As Hirsch has explained with reference to Holocaust images, cropped, uncaptioned or mislabelled images which proliferate in numerous publications do not aid comprehension of the overwhelming events they picture, hence the need for sustained critical analysis of such images.[6] In addition, the danger of society being flooded with horrifying images and reaching a saturation point where the natural shocked reaction fades and their ubiquity makes them invisible, known as 'compassion fatigue', remains.[7] However it seems unlikely that this point has been reached in Argentina, where, in contrast to the Holocaust, images of actual atrocities have been rare and those that do surface, such as the image published in *Clarín* in January of this year, retain their shock value.[8]

---

[4] Marianne Hirsch, 'Surviving Images: Holocaust Images and the Work of Postmemory', in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, ed. by Barbie Zelizer (London: The Athlone Press, 2001), pp. 214-46 (p. 223).

[5] Catherine Grant, 'Still Moving Images: Photographs of the Disappeared in Films about the "Dirty War" in Argentina', in *Phototextualities: Intersections of Photography and Narrative*, ed. by Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), pp. 63-86 (p. 68). Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 209.

[6] Marianne Hirsch, 'Nazi Photographs in Post-Holocaust Art: Gender as an Idiom of Memorialization', in *Phototextualities: Intersections of Photography and Narrative*, ed. by Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), pp. 19-40 (p. 24).

[7] Zelizer, p. 218.

[8] 'Revelan casos de torturas cuando entrenaban a comandos militares', *Clarín*, 16 January 2004, <http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/01/16/p-01201.htm> [accessed 23 August 2004].

Argentine sociologist Elizabeth Jelin reminds us that, 'The question of how remembering or forgetting occurs arises from the anxiety and even the anguish generated by the possibility of forgetting.'[9] There is great concern about the danger of forgetting, or the necessity of remembering, in Argentina. Images alone will not ensure memory, nor is there any simple narrative to hold up as the 'true' memory of Argentina's dictatorship. As Jelin has warned, 'There is no pause, no rest, because the memories have not been "deposited" in any place; they have to remain active in the hearts and minds of people.'[10] As a certain amount of temporal distance from the horrors of disappearance and torture has been attained, competing voices and opposing memories have arisen. Even more difficult questions are faced, such as those concerning the purpose of remembering. Zelizer asks what role Holocaust photographs fulfil, if not to prevent such events recurring. This aim can be clearly discerned in the famous title *Nunca Más*, which has been a frequent call in Argentina. Yet thus far, even the most recognized and affecting Holocaust images have not prevented further instances of genocide and state terror in Rwanda, Bosnia, Burundi and Argentina, to give only the most notorious examples.[11] There is no reason why images of the disappeared alone should prevent future atrocities in Latin America, as indeed they have not thus far, as illustrated by the revelation that democracy did not bring a complete end to instances of torture and extra judicial killings. Photographs do, however, continue to play an active role in the public debates about this period and form, to use Sturken's term, 'technologies of memory' which help to shape and influence memories.[12] Yet they do not simply contain memory and release it when looked at; while images remain the same, contexts alter and memories are reshaped.[13] Zelizer compares photographs to tombstones, 'they create a visual space for the dead that anchors the larger flow of discourse about the events that motivated their death.'[14] This point emphasizes the peculiar significance of images in countries which have suffered the phenomenon of state violence and the disappearance of persons. Even if looking at images cannot bring

---

[9] Elizabeth Jelin, *State Repression and the Struggles for Memory*, trans. by Judy Rein and Larcial Godoy-Anativia (London: Latin America Bureau, 2003), p. 9.

[10] Jelin, p. 40.

[11] Zelizer, p. 232.

[12] Sturken, p. 22.

[13] Ibid., p. 21.

back the dead, or prevent future massacres, we seem compelled to keep witnessing them in their various contexts, and by paying due attention to those shifting material and virtual contexts, we may be able to grasp the dynamic relationship between photography and memory.

---

[14] Zelizer, p. 238.

Bibliography

General
Althusser, Louis, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes towards an Investigation', in *Essays on Ideology*, trans. by Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 1984), pp. 1-60

Arendt, Hannah, *On Violence* (London: Allen Lane, 1970)

——. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, rev. edn. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973)

Beverley, John, José Oviedo and Michael Aronna, eds, *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995)

Colás, Santiago, *Postmodernity in Latin America: The Argentine Paradigm* (Durham, NC,: Duke University Press, 1994)

Corradi, Juan E., Patricia Weiss Fagen, and Manuel Antonio Garretón, eds, *Fear at the Edge: State Terror and Resistance in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992)

Fisher, Jo, *Out of the Shadows: Women, Resistance and Politics in South America* (London: Latin America Bureau, 1993)

Green, Linda, 'Living in a State of Fear', in *Fieldwork under Fire: Contemporary Studies of Violence and Survival*, ed. by Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius C.G.M. Robben (Berekley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 105-27

Harvey, David, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989)

Hopenhayn, Martin, 'Postmodernism and Neoliberalism in Latin America', in *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, ed. by John Beverley, José Oviedo and Michael Aronna (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995)

Hutcheon, Linda, *A Poetics of Postmodernisn* (London: Routledge, 1988)

Jameson, Fredric, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1984)

Keenan, Thomas, 'Mobilizing Shame', *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 103 (2004), 435-49

Kruijt, Dirk, and Kees Koonings, 'Introduction: Violence and Fear in Latin America', in *Societies of Fear: The Legacy of Civil War, Violence and Terror* (London: Zed, 1999), pp. 1-30

Mirzoeff, Nicholas, *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999)

Nordstrom, Carolyn, and Antonius C.G.M. Robben, eds, *Fieldwork under Fire: Contemporary Studies of Violence and Survival* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995)

Roniger, Luis, and Mario Sznajder, *The Legacy of Human Rights Violations in The Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile and Uruguay* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999)

Torres-Rivas, Edelberto, 'Epilogue: Notes on Terror, Violence, Fear and Democracy', in *Societies of Fear: The Legacy of Civil War and Terror*, ed. by Dirk Kruijt and Kees Koonings (London: Zed Books, 1999), pp. 285-300

Schelling, Vivian, 'Introduction: Reflections on the Experience of Modernity in Latin America', in *Through the Kaleidoscope: The Experience of Modernity in Latin America*, (London: Verso, 2000)

Shandler, Jeffrey, 'The Man in the Glass Box: Watching the Eichmann Trial on American Television', in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, ed. by Barbie Zelizer (London: The Athlone Press, 2001), pp. 91-110

Argentina

Abregú, Martín, 'Human Rights after the Dictatorship: Lessons from Argentina', *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 1 (2000), 12-18

Altamirano, Carlos, 'Lecciones de una guerra', *Punto de Vista*, 15 (1982), 3-5

Andersen, Martin Edwin, *Dossier Secreto: Argentina's Desaparecidos and the Myth of the "Dirty War"* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993)

Arditti, Rita, *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina* (London: University of California Press, 1999)

'Argentina Plans Dirty War Museum', *BBC News*, 10 February 2004 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/3474987.stm> [accessed 31 August 2004]

Bayer, Osvaldo, 'Pequeño recordatorio para un país sin memoria', in *Represión y reconstrucción de una cultura: el caso argentino*, ed. by Saúl Sosnowski (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1988), pp. 203-23

Branford, Sue, 'Argentines See Glimmer of Hope', *BBC News*, 31 October 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Americas/3227087.stm> [accessed 7 September 2004]

Caistor, Nick, *Argentina in Focus: A Guide to the People, Politics and Culture* (London: Latin America Bureau, 1996)

Carlson, Eric Stener, *I Remember Julia: Voices of the Disappeared* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996)

'Confesión de un militar: una jueza citaría a declarar a otros oficiales', *Clarín*, 6 June 2004, <http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/06/10/elpais/p-01401.htm> [accessed 23 August 2004]

'Desde que asumió Kirchner, hay casi cien militares presos', *Clarín*, 11 June 2004, <http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/06/11/elpais/p-01801.htm> [accessed 7 September 2004]

Dussel, I., S. Finocchio and S. Gojman, *Haciendo memoria en el país de Nunca Más* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1997)

Eloy Martínez, Tomás, *Santa Evita* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1995)

Feitlowitz, Marguerite, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)

Fernández Moores, Lucio, 'Massera indemnizó al hijo de un desaparecido y salvó su casa', *Clarín*, 24 August 2004, <http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/08/24/elpais/p-01401.htm> [accessed 8 September 2004]

Fisher, Jo, *Mothers of the Disappeared* (London: Zed, 1989)

Gillespie, Richard, 'Montoneros: Soldiers of Perón', in *The Argentina Reader*, ed. by Gabriela Nouzeilles and Graciela Montaldo (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 377-85

Gotkine, Elliot, 'Argentines Jailed for Baby Theft', *BBC News*, 30 March 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/americas/3581075.stm> [accessed 23 August 2004]

Gregorich, Luis, 'Literatura. Una descripción del campo: narrative, periodismo, ideología', in *Represión y reconstrucción de una cultura: el caso argentino*, ed. by Saúl Sosnowski (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1988), pp. 109-24

Guest, Iain, *Behind the Disappearances: Argentina's Dirty War against Human Rights and the United Nations* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990)

Guzmán Bouvard, Marguerite, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994)

James, Daniel, 'Perón and the People', in *The Argentina Reader*, ed. by Gabriela Nouzeilles and Graciela Montaldo (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 273-95

Jelin, Elizabeth, and Susana G. Kaufman, 'Layers of Memories: Twenty Years after in Argentina', in *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, ed. by T.G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 89-110

——. 'The Politics of Memory: The Human Rights Movement and the Construction of Democracy in Argentina', *Latin American Perspectives* 21 (1994), 38-58

Kaiser, Susana, 'Escraches: Demonstrations, Communication and Political Memory in Post-Dictatorial Argentina', *Media, Culture, Society,* 24, (2002), 499-516

Knudson, Jerry W., 'Veil of Silence: The Argentine Press and the Dirty War, 1976-1983', *Latin American Perspectives*, 24 (1997), 93-112

Lewis, Paul H., *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2002)

López Laval, Hilda, *Autoritarismo y cultura: Argentina 1976-83* (Madrid: Espiral Hispano Americana, 1995)

López Levy, Márcela, *We Are Millions: Neo-Liberalism and New Forms of Political Action in Argentina* (London: Latin America Bureau, 2004)

Marchak, Patricia, *God's Assassins: State Terrorism in Argentina in the 1970s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999)

Nouzeilles, Gabriela and Graciela Montaldo, eds, *The Argentina Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002)

Partnoy, Alicia, *The Little School: Tales of Disappearance and Survival*, trans. by Alicia Partnoy with Lois Athey and Sandra Braunstein (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1998)

Plotkin, Mariano Ben, *Mañana es San Perón: A Cultural History of Perón's Argentina*, trans. by Keith Zahniser (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2003)

'Revelan casos de torturas cuando entrenaban a comandos militares', *Clarín*, 16 January 2004, <http://old.clarin.com/diario/2004/01/16/p-01201.htm> [accessed 23 August 2004]

Robben, Antonius C.G.M., 'The Assault on Basic Trust: Disappearance, Protest, and Reburial in Argentina', in *Cultures Under Siege: Collective Violence and Trauma*, ed. by Antonius C.G.M. Robben and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 70-101

——. 'The Fear of Indifference: Combatants' Anxieties about the Political Identity of Civilian during Argentina's Dirty War', in *Societies of Fear: The Legacy of Civil War and Terror*, ed. by Dirk Kruijt and Kees Koonings (London: Zed, 1999), pp. 125-40

Rock, David, *Argentina 1516-1987: From Spanish Colonization to Alfonsin*, rev. edn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987)

Rouquié, Alain, *Argentina, Hoy* (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno, 1982)

Simpson, John, and Jana Bennett, *The Disappeared: The Chilling Story of Argentina's "Dirty War"* (London: Sphere, 1986)

Tosco, Agustín, 'The Cordobazo', in *The Argentina Reader*, ed. by Gabriela Nouzeilles and Graciela Montaldo (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 364-71

Taylor, Diana, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997)

——. 'Performing Gender: Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo', in *Negotiating Performance: Gender, Sexuality, and Theatricality in Latin/o America*, ed. by Diana Taylor and Juan Villegas (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 275-305

Taylor, Julie, 'Body Memories: Aide-Memoires and Collective Amnesia in the Wake of Argentine Terror', in *Body Politics: Disease, Desire and the Family*, ed. by Michael Ryan and Avery Gordon (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), pp. 192-203

Vazquez, Inés, ed., *Historia de las Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, 2nd edn, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Madres de Plaza de Mayo, 2003)

Verbitsky, Horacio, *The Flight: Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior*, trans. by Esther Allen (New York: New Press, 1996)

Zago, Manrique, ed., *1983-1993: Diez Años de Democracia* (Buenos Aires: Télam S.A., 1993)

Memory

Antze, Paul and Michael Lambek, eds, *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory* (New York: Routledge, 1996)

Arfuch, Leonor, 'Arte, memoria y archivo', *Punto de Vista*, 68 (2000), 34-37

Ashplant, T.G., Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper, 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics', in *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 3-85

Assman, Jan, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', *New German Critique*, 65 (1995), 125-33

Bal, Mieke, Jonathan Crewe and Leo Spitzer, *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1999)

Bennett, Jill, 'The Aesthetics of Sense-Memory: Theorising Trauma through the Visual Arts', in *Regimes of Memory*, ed. by Susannah Radstone and Katharine Hodgkin (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 27-39

Boyarin, Jonathan, 'Space, Time, and the Politics of Memory', in *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), pp. 1-37

Carrier, Peter, 'Places, Politics and the Archiving of Contemporary Memory in Pierre Nora's *Les lieux de mémoire*', in *Memory and Methodology*, ed. by Susannah Radstone (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 37-57

Caruth, Cathy, ed., *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995)

Cole, Tim, *Images of the Holocaust: The Myth of the 'Shoah Business'* (London: Duckworth, 1999)

Connerton, Paul, *How Societies Remember* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989)

Derrida, Jacques, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. by Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996)

Feuchtwang, Stephan, 'Loss: Transmissions, recognitions, authorisations', in *Regimes of Memory*, ed. by Susannah Radstone and Katharine Hodgkin (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 76-87

Erikson, Kai, 'Notes on Trauma and Community', in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. by Cathy Caruth (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 183-99

Feld, Claudia, 'El "rating" de la memoria en la televisión argentina', in *Políticas y estéticas de la memoria*, ed. by Nelly Richard (Santiago: Cuarto Propio, 2000), pp. 77-84

Freud, Sigmund, 'Mourning and Melancholia', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. by James Strachey, 24 vols (London: Hogarth Press and Institute for Pyscho-analysis, 1953-74), XIV (1957), pp. 243-58

——. 'Screen Memories', in *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. by James Strachey, 24 vols (London: Hogarth Press and Institute for Pyscho-analysis, 1953-74), III, pp. 303-22

Hacking, Ian, 'Memory Sciences, Memory Politics', in *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*, ed. by Paul Antze and Michael Lambek (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 67-87

Halbwachs, Maurice, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992)

Hansen, Miriam Bratu, '*Schindler's List* is not *Shoah*: The Second Commandment, Popular Modernism and Public Memory', *Critical Inquiry*, 22 (1996), 292-312

Hartman, Geoffrey H., *Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994)

Huyssen, Andreas, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003)

——. 'The Mnemonic Art of Marcelo Brodsky', in *Nexo* (Buenos Aires: La Marca Fotografía, 2001), pp. 7-11

———. *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York: Routledge. 1995)

Nora, Pierre, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26 (1989), 7-24

Kuhn, Annette, 'A Journey through Memory', in *Memory and Methodology*, ed. by Susannah Radstone (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 179-96

Laub, Dori, 'Truth and Testimony: The Process and the Struggle', in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. by Cathy Caruth (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 61-75

Le Goff, Jacques, *History and Memory*, trans. by Steven Rendall and Elizabeth Claman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992)

Locke, Chris, 'Digital Memory and the Problem of Forgetting', in *Memory and Methodology*, ed. by Susannah Radstone (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 26-37

Lorenz, Federico Guillermo, '¿De quién es el 24 de marzo? Las luchas por la memoria del golpe de 1976', in *Las conmemoraciones: Las disputas en las fechas "in-felices"*, ed. by Elizabeth Jelin (Madrid: Siglo veintiuno, 2002), pp. 53-100

Papoulias, Constantina, 'From the Agora to the Junkyard: Social Memory and Psychic Materialities', in *Regimes of Memory*, ed. by Susannah Radstone and Katharine Hodgkin (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 114-30

Perelli, Carina, 'Memoria de sangre: Fear, Hope, and Disenchantment in Argentina', in *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace*, ed. by Jonathan Boyarin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), pp. 39-66

Radstone, Susannah, ed., *Memory and Methodology* (Oxford: Berg, 2000)

Radstone, Susannah and Katherine Hodgkin, eds, *Regimes of Memory* (London: Routledge, 2003)

Radstone, Susannah, 'Trauma and Screen Studies: Opening the Debate', *Screen*, 42 (2001), 188-93

Reati, Fernando, 'Introducción', in *Memoria colectiva y políticas de olvido: Argentina y Uruguay 1970-1990*, ed. by Adriana J. Bergero, Fernando O. Reati and Andrés Avellaneda (Rosario, Argentina: Viterbo, 1997), pp. 11-28

Rosenbaum, Alan S., ed., *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide*, 2nd edn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001)

Schmucler, Héctor, 'Las exigencias de la memoria', *Punto de Vista*, 68 (2000), 5-9

Sturken, Marita, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (London: University of California Press, 1997)

Terán, Oscar, 'Tiempos de memoria', *Punto de Vista*, 68 (2000), 10-12

Terdiman, Richard, *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993)

Vezzetti, Hugo, 'Lecciones de la memoria: A los 25 años de la implantación del terrorismo de estado', *Punto de Vista*, 70 (2001), 12-18

——. 'Representaciones de los campos de concentración en la Argentina', *Punto de Vista*, 68 (2000), 13-17

Yerushalmi, Yosef Hayim, 'Reflexiones sobre el olvido', in *Usos del olvido* (Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión, 1988), pp. 13-26

Young, James, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993)

Photography

Barthes, Roland, *Camera Lucida*, trans. by Richard Howard (London: Vintage, 2000)

——. 'Rhetoric of the Image', in *Image-Music-Text*, ed. and trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 32-51

Batchen, Geoffrey, 'Ectoplasm: Photography in the Digital Age', in *Overexposed: Essays on Contemporary Photography*, ed. by Carol Squiers (New York: The New Press, 1999), pp. 9-23

Benjamin, Walter, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn (New York: Shocken, 1969), pp. 253-264

——. 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936), in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn (London: Fontana, 1992), pp. 211-44

Buck-Morss, Susan, 'Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered', *October*, 62 (1992), 3-41

Burgin, Victor, 'Looking at Photographs', in *Thinking Photography*, ed. by Victor Burgin (London: Macmillan 1982)

Crary, Jonathan, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the 19th Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990)

Edwards, Elizabeth, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001)

Facio, Sara, *La fotografía en la Argentina: desde 1840 a nuestras días*, (Buenos Aires, Azotea, 1995)

Grant, Catherine, 'Still Moving Images: Photographs of the Disappeared in Films about the "Dirty War" in Argentina', in *Phototextualities: Intersections of Photography and Narrative*, ed. by Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), pp. 63-86

Hirsch, Marianne, 'Nazi Photographs in Post-Holocaust Art: Gender as an Idiom of Memorialization', in *Phototextualities: Intersections of Photography and Narrative*, ed. by Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2003), pp19-40

——. *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997)

——. 'Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory', in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, ed. by Barbie Zelizer (London: The Athlone Press, 2001), pp214-46

Hughes, Alex, and Andrea Noble, eds, *Phototextualities: Intersections of Photography and Narrative* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003)

Johnson, M.K., '(Re)framing the Photograph', *Word and Image*, 9 (1993), 245-51

Lury, Celia, *Prosthetic Culture: Photography, Memory and Identity* (London: Routledge, 1998)

Metz, Christian, 'Photography and Fetish', in *October*, 34 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), 81-91

Mitchell, William J., 'Benjamin and the Political Economy of the Photograph', in *The Photography Reader*, ed. by Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 53-58

——. *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992)

Mitchell, W.J.T. 'The Photographic Essay: Four Case Studies', in *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 281-322

Price, Mary, *The Photograph: A Strange, Confined Space* (Stanford University Press, 1995)

Richard, Nelly, 'Imagen-recuerdo y borraduras', in *Políticas y estéticas de la memoria* (Santiago, Chile: Cuarto Propio, 2000), pp. 77-84

——. 'Memoria, fotografía y desaparición: drama y tramas', *Punto de Vista,* 68 (2000), 29-33

Robins, Kevin, 'Will Image Move Us Still?', in *The Photographic Image in Digital Culture*, ed. by Martin Lister (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 29-50

Rosler, Martha, 'In, Around and Afterthoughts (on Documentary Photography)', in *The Photography Reader*, ed. by Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 261-74

Sekula, Allan, 'Reading an Archive: Photography between Labour and Capital', in *The Photography Reader*, ed. by Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 443-52

——. 'The Body and the Archive', in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, ed. by Richard Bolton (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 343-89

Solomon-Godeau, Abigail, 'Who is Speaking Thus? Some Questions about Documentary Photography', in *Photography at the Dock* (University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 169-83

Sontag, Susan, *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1979; repr. 2002)

——. *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Penguin, 2004)

Sturken, Marita, and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

Sturken, Marita, 'The Image as Memorial: Personal Photographs in Cultural Memory', in *The Familial Gaze*, ed. by Marianne Hirsch (Hanover: University of New England, 1999)

Tagg, John, *The Burden of Representation* (London: Macmillan, 1988)

Wells, Liz, ed., *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, 2nd edn, (London: Routledge, 2002)

Zelizer, Barbie, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998)

Digital Culture

Bush, Vannevar, 'As We May Think', in *Electronic Culture: Technology and Visual Representation*, ed. by Timothy Druckrey (New York: Aperture, 1995), pp. 29-45

Cleaver, Harry M. 'The Zapatista Effect: The Internet and the Rise of an Alternative Political Fabric', *Journal of International Affairs*, 51 (1998), 621-40

Druckrey, Timothy, ed., *Electronic Culture: Technology and Visual Representation* (New York: Aperture, 1996)

Kember, Sarah, *Virtual Anxiety: Photography, New Technologies and Subjectivity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998)

Lister, Martin, 'Photography in the Age of Electronic imaging', in *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, ed. by Liz Wells, 2nd edition, (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 303-47.

——. ed., *The Photographic Image in Digital Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995)

Lunenfeld, Peter, 'Unfinished Business', in *The Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000)

Manovich, Lev, 'The Paradoxes of Digital Photography', in *The Photography Reader*, ed. by Liz Wells (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 240-49

Martínez Torres, María Elena, 'Civil Society, the Internet, and the Zapatistas', *Peace Review*, 31 (2001), 347-55

Rabinovitz, Lauren, and Abraham Geil, eds, *Memory Bytes: History, Technology, and Digital Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004)

Reading, Anna, 'Clicking on Hitler: The Virtual Holocaust @Home', in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, ed. by Barbie Zelizer (London: The Athlone Press, 2001), pp. 323-39

Ritchin, Fred, 'Photojournalism in the Age of Computers', in *The Critical Image: Essays on Contemporary Photography*, ed. by Carol Squiers (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1991), pp. 28-37

Sterling, Bruce, 'A Short History of the Internet', *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction,* 1993, available at <http://www.library.yale.edu/div/instruct/internet/history.htm> [accessed 15/06/2004]

Electronic Sources

'9/11 Memorial', <http://terroristattack.com/index.php> [accessed 1 September 2004]

Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, <http://www.abuelas.org.ar> [accessed 1 September 2004]

Amnesty International, <http://www.amnesty.org>

Amnesty International, 'Flowers in the Desert', <http://web.amnesty.org/actforwomen/373-300804-event-eng> [accessed 26 September 2004]

Asociación Civil Memoria Abierta, 'Memoria Abierta – Acción Coordinada de Organizaciones de Derechos Humanos' <http://www.memoriaabierta.org.ar> [accessed 1 September 2004]

Asociación de ex Detenidos Desaparecidos, <http://www.exdesaparecidos.org.ar/presentacion.htm> [accessed 1 September 2004]

Asociación de ex Detenidos Desaparecidos, 'Boletín Electrónico de noticias y actividades de la AEDD' (2003) <http://ar.groups.yahoo.com/group/boletinaedd> [accessed 1 September 2004]

Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, 'La dura ternura: luchar siempre – Una historia de las Madres de Plaza de Mayo' (Buenos Aires: 2002) [on CD-ROM]

Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, <http://www.madres.org> [accessed 1 September 2004]

Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales, <http://www.cels.org.ar> [accessed 26 September 2004]

Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas (CONADEP), *Nunca Más: Informe de la CONADEP* (1984) < http://www.nuncamas.org/investig/investig.htm> [accessed 1 September 2004]

Committee on Conscience, 'Photography', <http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/gallery/gallery.php> [accessed 26 September 2004]

Corner, Rachel, 'Algeria: Mothers of the Disappeared', <http//www.foto8.com/foto8journal/RachelCorner/index.html> [accessed 26 September 2004]

CNN International, 'CNN September 11 Memorial', (2001) <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/memorial/lists/by-name/index.html> [accessed 31 August 2004]

Human Rights Watch, <http://www.hrw.org> [accessed 20 September 2004]

Longoni, Eduardo, <http://www.eduardolongoni.com.ar> [accessed 26 September 2004]

Madres de Plaza de Mayo – Línea Fundadora, <http://www.madres-lineafundadora.org> [accessed 1 September 2004]

'Más vale tarde que nunca: Rosario Ibarra', *Noticieros Televisa*, <http://www.esmas.com/noticierostelevisa/mexico/324623.html> [accessed 26 September 2004]

Names Project Foundation, 'The AIDS Memorial Quilt', <http://aidsquilt.org> [accessed 25 September 2004]

Pegasus Research International, 'Latin American Web Users', <http://www.pegasusresearch.net/metrics/growthla.htm> [accessed 5 September 2004]

'Proyecto Desaparecidos', <http://www.desaparecidos.org> [accessed 1 September 2004]

Proyecto Internacional de Derechos Humanos – Londres, 'Memoria Viva: Archivo electrónico de las violaciones de los Derechos Humanos durante la dictadura en Chile' (2004) <http://www.memoriaviva.com> [accessed 31 August 2004]

'September 11 Memorial', (2001) <http://www.sept11thmemorial.com> [accessed 1 September 2004]

'Sin Olvido', <http://www.sinolvido.org/index.shtml> [accessed 1 September 2004]

'The Vanished Gallery', <http://www.yendor.com/vanished/> [accessed 1 September 2004]

'The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall Page', <http://thewall-usa.com> [accessed 25 September 2004]

Film

El Nuremberg Argentino (dir. Miguel Rodriguez Arías, Argentina, 2002)

Garage Olimpo (dir. Marco Bechis, 1999)

La Amiga (dir. Jeanine Meerapfel, Argentina/West Germany, 1989)

La Historia Oficial (dir. Luis Puenzo, Argentina, 1985)

La Republica Perdida II Dir. Miguel Pérez, Argentina, 1986