Argentina and its Desaparecidos

Principal Investigator

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Project Abstract

Mundos Especulares is a video documentary and written research report on the films of Argentina that specifically focus on the national trauma of the 30,000 disappeared under the 1976-1983 dictatorship. The research focuses on the historical and formal developments of these films in relation to theories of trauma recovery and representation, as well as the socio-political context in which they were created.

The documentary will be shot during the spring quarter in Buenos Aires, based upon interviews as well as visits to historical centers such as the Plaza de Mayo and the memorial museum at the ESMA (Navy Petty-Officers School of Mechanics). The interviews will be largely comprised of film theorists, historians, and directors; as well as members of the humanitarian organizations of relatives of the disappeared, such as HIJOS and Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo.

Proposed Product

Video Documentary and Article

Contributions

The research focuses on the development of a specific country's post-traumatic history, focusing on the role of cultural and artistic production in the construction of national memory and recovery. The analysis will emphasize the complex relationship between the films' attempts for trauma comprehension and the specific historical or political context of their production. The films' formal and epistemological constructions will also be analyzed in terms of cross-cultural theories of trauma. Therefore, the research will contribute to a larger body of theoretical work on memory trauma and representation as well as analyses of Argentina's specific process of healing. Ultimately, I hope to combine my studies in film, cultural anthropology, and Spanish in order to better understand popular media's role in societal processes of trauma recovery.