

Human Rights and the Right to Remember in Place in Contemporary Buenos Aires

A UCSB Geography Colloquium Presentation by

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Abstract:

Activists in the Argentine human rights movement are involved in efforts to create a network of places of memory and commemoration in Buenos Aires. These efforts are related to broader ideas about “place rights”, namely, rights to have and make places for representation and progressive citizenship in the city. To justify the need for new places of memory, activists and NGOs draw connections to events of the recent past, in particular the disappearances of tens of thousands of people in Argentina in the late 1970s as a result of state-sponsored terrorism. Because the *disappeared* were robbed of their right to exist, places of memory focusing both on their experiences and on the continuing struggle for human rights are seen as a kind of progressive urban intervention that begins to remedy the wounds of the recent past. A critical analysis of conflicts over the design and construction of places of memory in Buenos Aires invites reflection on the ways in the city becomes a key player in the crucial task of remembering and of creating collective historical memory for future generations.

Fernando J. Bosco is Associate Professor of Geography at San Diego State University, where he is also the co-Chair of the Interdisciplinary Urban Studies Program. His research sits at the intersection of social, political, and urban geography. He has written on the geographic dimensions of human rights movements in Argentina, on alternative practices of citizenship by Hispanic mothers and their children along the US-Mexico border, and on the globalization of organizations that deal with children’s poverty in Latin America, among several other topics. His articles appear in journals such as the *Annals of the AAG*, *Urban Geography*, *Gender Place and Culture*, *Social and Cultural Geography*, *Children’s Geographies* and *Antipode*. He is currently working on the second edition of his co-edited book “Placing Latin America: Contemporary Themes in Human Geography”, published by Rowman and Littlefield.

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