

awareness of the persistence of the violence of the past. In this paper I focus only on those conversations I had with members of Abuelas and Madres. The story of Abuelas and Madres is important to re-tell because they were the founders of a movement in Argentina—the human rights movement—that today grounds its work primarily in the memory of the state violence of 1976 to 1983.

³Thus far, Abuelas have succeeded in finding 97 of these children. These children are referred to as appropriated or missing children rather than disappeared children because, unlike the disappeared, they are alive.

⁴Located in front of the federal government house, Plaza de Mayo stands as the hub of political activity in the capital city

⁵This term literally means “quick trigger” and refers to the freedom and impunity with which the Argentinean Federal Police uses violence often ending in the death of Argentinean citizens.

⁶After the 1985 federal trial two laws of impunity were enacted for crimes committed during the dictatorship: *La Ley de Punto Final* (The Law of Final Stop) which assured that no military personnel could be tried after 1986 and *La Ley de Obediencia Debida* (The Law of Due Obedience) in 1987 which stated that middle-ranking officers could not be tried on the basis that they were following orders. Official pardons were granted in 1990 by then President Carlos Menem to those convicted in the 1985 trial. The Supreme Court declared these laws unconstitutional in 2005, which provided the conditions necessary to begin trials of those who committed crimes during the dictatorship. The first of these trials took place in 2006.

⁷Although present-day rights groups often situate their struggles within a legacy of violence in Argentina, what distinguishes them from the human rights movement established by Abuelas and Madres is that present-day rights groups do not necessarily ground their political activism in remembering los Desaparecidos. An example of a present-day rights movement is the *piquetero* movement composed of groups such as *Frente Darío y Maxi* and *Movimiento Territorial Liberación*.

⁸Chicha of Asociación Anahí mostly makes herself present in these demands through signing petitions and letters sent to the government and published in newspapers. She is unable to attend many public events because she is losing her eyesight.

⁹As of yet, Chicha of Asociación Anahí has only attended the trial of Miguel Etchecolatz. Miguel Etchecolatz was involved in the bombing of Chicha's son's house and is believed to know to whom Clara Anahí was given.

¹⁰Asociación Madres grounds much of their work in their refusal to accept the death of their children. While they understand that in fact their children are dead, they believe that if they represent them in any way as dead they are in effect killing them because no one has ever confirmed their death by way of, for example, admitting to their murder or disclosing what happened to their remains.

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PATIENCE WHEATLEY

Undo

If only there were
an undo button
in life

an undo button that would wipe out
the mistakes we make
and foretell worse
before we make them

like the time I left you standing lonely
on the street
because I thought
you expected me to leave

Patience Wheatley's third book of poetry was published by Pendass Productions. Her poems appear in The Missing Line published by Inanna Publications in 2004.