Re-Imagining Screen and Stage in a Human Rights-Centered Curriculum

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This essay explores the benefits of teaching and learning Latin American theatre in dialogue with film. Specifically, I discuss the dialogue between documentary modes of performance in the context of interdisciplinary courses on human rights and the arts that I have designed and taught in a Latin American studies program at American University. Though I teach advanced undergraduate and master's level courses through the Department of World Languages and Cultures in the College of Arts and Sciences, many of my students come from the School of International Service, the School of Communication, and the Kogod School of Business. Schools across American University share a commitment to prioritizing research on human rights, social justice, and community-based learning. As such, my students are deeply interested in studying activism, social movements, and human rights issues across Latin America.

In my classes, I introduce theatre as a fundamental paradigm for understanding the collective, embodied, and intersubjective formations of human rights movements and action. Recent Latin American documentary theatre and film reveal a rich cross-pollination between genres: Plays frequently incorporate documentary film footage, and many documentary films have become more theatrical or performative in nature.[1] In this essay I show how studying documentary Latin American theatre and film in tandem can deepen and enhance an understanding of how these genres shape new modes of self-expression and activism, unsettle divisions between fact and fiction, advance and question existing forms of truth-telling, contribute new archives of knowledge, and engage discourses of memory, history, and human rights. I begin the essay by offering a theoretical framework and pedagogical rationale for learning and teaching documentary theatre in conjunction with docu-

mentary film. At the end of the essay, I propose the pairing of two Argentine works—Albertina Carri's film *Los rubios* (2003) and Lola Arias' play *Mi vida después* (2009)—as a case study for how to approach the joint teaching of documentary film and theatre. Grounded in a contextualized analysis of human rights during Argentina's post-dictatorial period, this pairing provides an example of how documentary film and theatre, when studied together in the classroom, challenge students to transcend barriers between genres and disciplines, to think critically about how documentary theatre and film both foster and complicate truth-telling, and to consider the ethical questions inherent to the process of making and viewing documentary work in a human rights framework.

One of the first objectives of a course comparing new documentary theatre and film is to reflect on the historical relationship between the genres of theatre and film and how the 21st-century resurgence in documentary modes in both genres has influenced perceptions of the exclusivity of the two genres. In his seminal work, *What Is Cinema?* (1967), film scholar André Bazin suggests that film offers a truer reflection of reality, whereas theatre is a genre of artifice. In contrast to the conventional forms of illusion produced through theatre, Bazin writes that cinema, following "directly from its photographic nature" engenders an "inalienable realism" (416). To Susan Sontag, this identification of cinema with reality and theatre with artifice creates a "crude boundary" between the two genres, with the result that "[c]inema, at once high art and popular art, is cast as the art of the authentic. Theatre, by contrast, means dressing up, pretense, lies" (26).[2] In maintaining this "crude boundary," critics reveal a desire to be able to identify "the definitive art form" through the reinforcement of barriers separating genres (35).[3] In her book on post-dictatorship Argentine film and theatre, Philippa Page reflects on how these ongoing border disputes between the two genres have generated a "latent desire/nostalgia for artistic autonomy that prevents the borrowing between theatre, cinema and other genres" (15).[4] She turns to the paradigm of performance to question some of the longstanding assumptions that have kept the genres of film and theatre historically separate (8). Recent scholarship on Latin American cultural production likewise shows renewed interest in destabilizing the borders between film and theatre.[5] Courses that incorporate both theatre and film establish an optimal framework for encouraging students to reflect on the tensions and synergies between the two genres as they have evolved over the 20th and 21st centuries.

In this essay, I propose theoretical and pedagogical approaches that focus specifically on the relationship between documentary theatre and documentary film in an interdisciplinary Latin American studies curriculum. There is a tendency among students (and in general) to think of documentaries first and foremost as films. There is, however, a less studied but well-established tradition of documentary theatre grounded in the work of 20th-century playwrights Bertolt Brecht, Erwin Piscator, and Peter Weiss.[6] The study of documentary film in tandem with documentary theatre broadens students' understanding of what constitutes a documentary and the specific claims that documentaries make. Though hesitant to impose another artificial border between the realms of documentary and fiction, I choose to focus exclusively on works categorized as documentaries here because of the relationship these works have to "the real," an elusive category that has recently captured the interest of artists and scholars across disciplines and contexts. Among scholars who work on Latin American cultural production, Óscar Cornago discusses artists' attempts—in theatre and film—to create a "reality effect" that goes beyond what is considered fiction, truth, illusion, and the theatrical (5).[7] Beatriz Jaguaribe writes about the media's obsessive packaging of the experience of the real in Brazil and the public's enduring desire to seek out the "shock of the real" (329). Jens Andermann observes the "exceptional and peculiar 'explosion of the real'" that coincided with the "global process of resurgence and refashioning of the documentary" in Argentina in the wake of the crisis of 2001 (95). As I discuss further on, this new fascination with the real holds particular relevance for courses engaged in the study of human rights, as human rights work often involves truth-telling, providing evidence, and generating an archive, all tasks that to an extent depend on the ability to identify what is real.

Documentary modes are intimately involved in this renewed exploration of what is considered real and true. Documentary film scholar Bill Nichols notes that the "documentary tradition relies heavily on being able to convey to us the impression of authenticity" (xiii). Theorists are careful to emphasize that while documentaries may appear to convey reality, they do not serve as an "unimpeachable and objective witness to public events." (Forsyth and Megson 3). What they do well is employ strategic practices of "realist encoding" that create the illusion of adhering strictly to objective reality (Jaguaribe 328). Carol Martin, in discussing the global emergence of documentary theatre, writes that the real is a "category that documentary stages both assert and challenge in relation to claims of verisimilitude and

truth" (*Dramaturgy* 1). In both film and theatre, there is consensus among scholars that new forms of documentary destabilize the relationship between fiction and non-fiction. Martin writes that "much of today's dramaturgy of the real uses the frame of the stage not as a separation, but a communion of the real and simulated; not as a distancing fiction from nonfiction, but as a melding of the two" (*Dramaturgy* 2). Documentary film scholars Nichols, Michael Chanan, Michael Renov, and Stella Bruzzi similarly have negated a strict division between fiction and documentary.[8] And most recently, in their co-edited volume *Visual Synergies in Fiction and Documentary Film from Latin America,* Joanna Page and Miriam Haddu shift the discussion away from the question of "whether documentary can be differentiated from fiction through its provision of an 'objective' account of reality" and instead suggest that what is at stake is "the nature of the real itself" and how it is "caught up in regimes of representation associated with fiction and / or documentary film" (4). Transcending the barrier between fiction and documentary, the category of the real inspires a new set of questions that ask us (and our students) to reflect on notions of truth, authenticity, and experience, the idea of the archive and the embodiment of knowledge, the construction of memory, and the technological mediation of everyday life.

While there exists a well-established body of literature comparing the genres of film and theatre as well as considerable scholarship comparing documentary and fictional modes in film, the relationship between new documentary theatre and documentary film remains relatively unexplored territory. A part of the rationale for scholarship and teaching that focuses on documentary theatre and film rests on the fact that there are such productive synergies to be found between the two genres. Both address a similar set of questions, both engage the evolving category of "the real," and both borrow techniques and practices from one another, often producing a rich, hybridized "intermediality" that lends self-consciousness to the representational practices of documentary work and further contributes to breaking down genre barriers.[9] There are indications that in the last decade documentary film and theatre have developed a mutual obsession with one another, as seen in the borrowing of techniques and in the reflective dialogue they establish with one another.[10] Increasingly, contemporary theatre incorporates screened narratives traditionally belonging to the realm of documentary film.

According to Nichols, over the last several decades documentaries have taken a reflective and performative turn, and both the reflective and performative modes of documentary film he identifies are interested in interrogating

and destabilizing notions of the real. He writes that "[t]he reflexive mode is the most self-conscious and self-questioning mode of representation. Realist access to the world, the ability to provide persuasive evidence, the possibility of indisputable proof, the solemn, indexical bond between an indexical image and what it represents—all these notions come under suspicion" (128). The performative mode goes one step further and raises questions about the meaning of knowledge and, specifically, how it is embodied. To Nichols, the "performative documentary underscores the complexity of our knowledge of the world by emphasizing its subjective and affective dimension" (131). Performative documentaries are often autobiographical in nature and participate in what Renov has identified as the "return to subjectivity" in documentary film (xxiv).[11] In a similar vein, Bruzzi observes that "documentaries are performative acts, inherently fluid and unstable and informed by issues of performance and performativity" (1). In drawing attention to their inherent performativity, Bruzzi argues that recent documentary practices are intent on defining authenticity differently, in a way that "eschews the traditional adherence to observation or to a Bazinian notion of the transparency of film and replaces this with a multi-layered, performative exchange between subjects, filmmakers/apparatus and spectators" (10). This turn toward the embodiment of knowledge, the self-questioning, performative practices of documentary film, and the subjective, autobiographical, and affective engagement of artists, subjects, and spectators resonates in spectacular fashion with emerging documentary theatre practices and demands further critical attention from researchers, professors, and students alike.

Until now I have focused on providing support for the justification of studying documentary theatre and film in tandem. Here I would like to argue for the significance of developing this comparative study in a human rights framework. Across universities in the US there is greater need for courses that address the engagement of the arts with human rights practice. Courses that foster this engagement challenge students to consider the diverse roles the arts can assume within a human rights framework, such as testimony, memorialization, alternative channel of information, counter-narrative to official discourse, propaganda, political manifesto, and instrument of change. The arts form an important part of what Fuyuki Kurasawa calls the "ethico-political labour" necessary to convert the idea of global justice from one "steeped in noble sentiments and intentions, or a juridified concept enshrined in multilateral declarations, into an ensemble of emancipatory practices" (4). As I have argued in this essay, documentary film and theatre are expressive

practices that are critically poised to reflect on and intervene in human rights frameworks. They are often involved in the tasks of truth-telling, preserving the archive, clarifying the past, and providing counter-information to media, journalistic, legal, and "official" governmental accounts.

Furthermore, creators of documentary film and theatre must confront the ethical question of how to represent their subjects. In addressing this question, Nichols discusses the meaning of film subjects to documentary filmmakers: "Their value to the filmmaker consists not in what a contractual relationship can promise but in what their own lives embody. Their value resides not in the ways in which they disguise or transform their everyday behavior and personality but in the ways in which their everyday behavior and personality serves the needs of the filmmaker" (5). While filmmakers must attend to a unique set of ethical questions that arise from using non-actors in documentary work, so too must spectators (our students included) consider their own relationship to onstage/onscreen subjects. As theatre scholar Beatriz Trastoy observes, while autobiographical theatre creates the greatest potential for spectators to identify with onstage actors, it also can create the conditions for spectators to engage in voyeurism at a perverse level.[12] A course interested in investigating the relationships between documentary film and theatre in a human rights framework must undertake a rigorous study of the contexts of performance, an approach Patrice Pavis calls "analysis as reconstruction" (11). But just as important as meaningful contextualization in these courses is a focus on the ethics of production and the questions surrounding the responsibility of the creators of documentary film and theatre. Also key is a discussion of the motives for making documentary works in a human rights setting, whether it is driven by a desire to expose or denounce past crimes, commemorate the loss of loved ones, promote activism, or generate solidarity and a sense of community.

A number of documentary film and theatre scholars emphasize the capacity for documentary works to move beyond their representational role to actively intervene in the construction of memory, political activism, and community. For Argentine documentary filmmaker Carmen Guarini, while some films may transmit memory, others "intend to become part of that memory—usually acknowledging the complexity of its representation and showing the process of memory production, its limits and difficulties" (qtd. in Waterson 65). As Guarini's observation shows, more than just a medium for transmitting information, documentary film can form an integral part of the archive that embodies memory. This archive, instead of being exported

primarily for an international audience, can also provide an opportunity for self-reflection, commemoration, and memory preservation among community members. In her analysis of the documentary films denouncing human rights abuses that occurred in May 2006 in San Salvador Atenco and Texcoco, Mexico, Livia Hinegardner asserts that documentary films are not only important for their role in registering evidence of human rights abuses for an external public. They also provide, she argues, "a display of solidarity and political organization" created by and for the community that experienced the trauma firsthand (178). Likewise, in her observations about documentary theatre, Martin stresses the active, participatory role of theatre of the real in determining "how we come to know and understand what has happened" (*Theatre of the Real* 5). She continues, saying that "[a]rguably, some theatre of the real can even be understood as intervening in history—as changing, or trying to change, history itself" (5). A course examining contextualized practices of documentary theatre and film will necessarily take into account production and reception, but will also benefit from considering the ways in which documentary films and plays are capable of intervening actively in the construction of the memory archive, political activism, community, and historical revisionism.

Documentary films, traditionally so attached to an idea of authenticity or reality, are often envisioned as a kind of archive that serves to record and preserve evidence. Sontag explains that "cinema is a 'medium' as well as an art, in the sense that it can encapsulate any of the performing arts and render it in a film transcription" (25). According to Sontag, theatre, unlike film, can never be a medium: "[O]ne can make a movie 'of' a play but not a play 'of' a movie (25). While some might find this last assertion debatable, the point is clear and serves to explain why documentary films, as mechanical recordings of events, might readily be considered archives. Documentary theatre, on the other hand, has a more complex and nuanced relationship to the archive. Specifically, documentary theatre's incorporation of materials considered part of the archive accentuates the tension between the truth claims that the archive advances and the constant play between fiction and reality that is enacted on documentary stages. According to Martin, the archive of documentary theatre is created from "interviews, documents, hearings, records, video, film, photographs, and the like" (*Dramaturgy* 18). These elements belong to the archive as it is conventionally conceived, as material and supposedly stable, as opposed to the repertoire, a concept that Diana Taylor develops in her book *The Archive and the Repertoire* to refer to alternative

forms of transmitting cultural memory consisting of embodied, ephemeral expression (19-20). Documentary theatre effectively blends the archive and the repertoire, allowing bodies to become archives onstage and archives to become embodied as part of the performative repertoire.[13] This blending onstage both reinforces and undermines the power of the archive. As Martin writes, "Because so much documentary theatre has been made in order to 'set the record straight' or to bring materials otherwise ignored to the public's attention, we ought not ignore its moral and ethical claims to truth" (23).

But what happens to these claims to truth when the validity of the archive is challenged onstage? Paola Hernández and Julie Ward have considered this question in depth in their pioneering work on new documentary theatre in Latin America.[14] Hernández notes a departure in new Latin American documentary theatre from the political motivation found in documentary theatre in the vein of Piscator and Weiss and a shift toward a questioning of the truth of the archive, often in a subtly parodic manner (116). Ward argues that practitioners of new documentary theatre are not just interested in using the archive, but in manipulating the archive onstage (8). Thus, while documentary film may be envisioned as an archive, documentary theatre, by incorporating archival materials into performances, has the potential to establish more reflective dialogue with the form, meaning, and function of the archive. Perhaps more than documentary film, documentary theatre draws attention to the fact that the archive, while essential to presenting evidence and advancing human rights claims, acquires meaning only as part of a human agenda advanced by artists, historians, journalists, human rights advocates, and politicians.

In the section that follows, I would like to present a concrete example of how Latin American documentary film and theatre might be taught in dialogue to facilitate meaningful, productive intellectual exchange among students. I will discuss a specific case study from Argentina in which I approach the study of theatre and film collaboratively in a human rights context: the cultural production that has emerged during Argentina's post-dictatorship period (1983-present).

Albertina Carri's film *Los rubios* follows Albertina's quest to reconstruct the lives of her parents, Montonero militants and intellectuals Roberto Carri and Ana María Caruso, who were disappeared in 1977 when Albertina was 3 years old. Together with her film crew, Albertina travels to her childhood neighborhood to interview neighbors who knew her parents. She visits the farm where she grew up, sifts through photographs, visits the former detention center where her parents were held and tortured, watches filmed videos

of interviews with former militants who knew her parents, and has a blood sample taken to aid in the process of identifying her parents' remains. Yet despite this extensive exploration, the film is only partially about her detective work to find out who her parents really were. As Joanna Page notes, "Albertina's investigation into the circumstances of her parents' disappearance is continually derailed by another narrative, the making of *Los rubios* ("Memory and Meditation" 30). The crew is present throughout the film; we witness them preparing the scenes, assembling microphones and cameras, and discussing shots with Albertina and Analía Couceyro, the actor who plays the role of Albertina at times during the film. Through the use of dynamic and self-reflexive camera work, Page writes, "the film disrupts identification, refusing to indulge in catharsis, and mourning simply the impossibility of mourning" (30). This disruption of identification has been hailed as one of the most novel and provocative aspects of the film, inhibiting not only a cathartic release but also the identification of Albertina as a victim and inheritor of her parents' political militancy. As Gabriela Nouzeilles writes, "What we have in *Los rubios* is the display of a scrupulous but irreverent reading of inheritance" (273). Drawing on a repertoire of performative filmic devices, the film also emphasizes the fragmentary, elusive nature of memory. *Los rubios* provides a highly self-reflexive account of the limits of the documentary genre in providing testimony to a history marked by absence.

Like Carri, playwright and director Lola Arias directs her attention to the generation that came of age during the aftermath of the dictatorship in her play *Mi vida después*, premiered in Buenos Aires in 2009.[15] The play introduces the autobiographical accounts of six individuals (born between 1972 and 1983) who were all affected by the actions of the dictatorship differently and to varying degrees. Over the course of the performance, audiences learn that among the cast are children of disappeared fathers, guerrilla fighters, a race-car driver, a journalist, an intellectual, a banker, a priest, and an intelligence officer and torturer. Arias describes the play as a kind of time machine that allows the performers to travel between past, present, and future (Longoni and Verzero 9). Accompanied onstage by objects inherited from their parents (photos, letters, voice recordings, clothes, and even a turtle), performers take turn narrating their stories and the stories of their parents' lives while other performers enact the scenes onstage as they are being described. Whereas in *Los rubios* Carri reenacts scenes from her parents' lives using Playmobil figures and voice-over narration,[16] the inherited objects in Arias' play represent an affective connection to the childrens' parents but also provide the

performers with an important distancing strategy by diffusing the emotional charge of the narratives and turning attention to the objects onstage.

Both *Los rubios* and *Mi vida después* engage a shift in perspective to a second generation of Argentines who have sought to articulate their relationship to the dictatorship and their parents' generation on their own terms.[17] Both of these works are highly reflexive and creative in the kinds of devices they employ to destabilize representational practices and traditional notions of documentary. They are also largely autobiographical, though individuals portrayed in both works participate in extensive role-playing and doubling, which serves to blend fictional and non-fictional modes. Both works exhibit an obsession with evidence and the presentation of objects, images, and personal effects from the past, and both establish a light mood in their treatment of the past, which marks a significant departure from the solemn tone that traditionally has characterized documentaries on the disappeared in Argentina.[18] In discussing these two documentary works together in a human rights context, perhaps their most provocative contribution is to question the longstanding norms that dictate who in Argentina has the right to speak or engage in creative expression about the dictatorship and the disappeared.[19]

In post-dictatorship Argentina, legitimacy of voice has traditionally been reserved for those "directly affected" by dictatorial violence (Jelin 177). Elizabeth Jelin writes that "the very notion of 'truth' and the legitimacy of voice (or even the ownership of the issue) became embedded in personal experience and in biological and genetic bonds" (177). Likewise, Cecilia Sosa explains that the human rights groups that formed during and after the dictatorship, such as the Mothers of La Plaza de Mayo, the Grandmothers of La Plaza de Mayo, and the Relatives, Children, and Siblings, constituted a kind of "wounded family" that "evoked the biological tie to support their claims" (65). Albertina Carri has the actor Analía Couceyro play her in the film, and in doing so, Sosa argues that "*Los rubios* challenges the identity politics that staged a figure of victim in bloodline inscription" (74). In *Mi vida después*, Arias poses a similar challenge to longstanding blood politics, as her cast includes the voices of those who were not children of the disappeared but who nonetheless were affected by the dictatorship. In an interview, Arias reflects on her own legitimacy in creating a play about the dictatorship and admits that while she was hesitant at first to embark on such a project, she emphasizes that her play is "not a story about the 'children of,' it is a story that belongs to everyone, in the sense that it is the story of Argentina, of our generation, and of the generation of others" (Longoni and Verzero 12).[20] As

Jelin notes, the broadening of this dialogue is crucial for constructing "more democratic, inclusive, and civic engagement with the past" (100). In allowing actors to assume the first person in playing others, and through creative doubling strategies, Carri and Arias highlight the power of the autobiographical mode while simultaneously undermining the authenticity and legitimacy often attributed to it.

In the classroom, critical juxtaposition of these two works lays the groundwork for a productive conversation on the ways in which documentary film and theatre intervene in human rights contexts. While I have focused here on how each of these two works approaches the question of legitimacy of voice and its ties to blood politics in postdictatorship Argentina, a comparative analysis of these works also allows students to focus a critical lens on discourses related to history, postmemory, victimhood, and second-generation cultural production. The pairing of *Los rubios* and *Mi vida después* offers students the opportunity to witness firsthand the blurring of boundaries between documentary film and theatre. *Los rubios* provides an example of a highly performative documentary through the use of elaborate filmic devices, role-playing, the presence of the director (and protagonist) intervening in many of the shots, and the repetitive rehearsals of scenes.[21] While *Los rubios* moves toward performance, *Mi vida después* acquires a filmic dimension through the incorporation of screened images as an interactive backdrop to many of the scenes in the play. Students will appreciate the intimate dialogue that can be established through theatre and film within and between these two works.

Yet while sharing and borrowing of techniques in the two works abound, there are also important differences between the two genres that can be drawn out and explored in the classroom. For example, what can *Los rubios* do that *Mi vida después* cannot, and vice versa? Though both works are autobiographical in nature, as Susan Bennett has argued, "if we credit the filmic body with a privileged referentiality that rarely fails to intensify signification, then the sheer dimensionality of the body in live, autobiographical performance provides what might easily be seen as a frenzy of signification" (34) How do the affective dimensions of spectatorship differ in documentary film and theatre? While *Los rubios*, a mechanically recorded narrative, constitutes an archive, what kind of archive did the repeated performances of *Mi vida después* with the same cast over the course of three years constitute? Arias comments on how events in the actors' personal lives and national events became incorporated into the play over the three years it was playing: "That was a very strange and appealing aspect of the play, to think that at all times

the meaning of the play was being modified, not only by their stories but by the story of the country" (6).[22] Thus, *Mi vida después* represents an alternative kind of archive, a live, embodied one enacted repeatedly in modified performances.

Constructing dialogue between documentary film and theatre in the classroom multiplies avenues of interpretation and new perspectives on how documentary film and theatre can intervene in human rights contexts. The rich borrowing of techniques and devices taking place between contemporary documentary film and theatre provides students with the perfect opportunity to question the longstanding division between the genres of film and theatre and to re-evaluate assumptions of what constitutes a documentary work. The emergence of the category of "the real" in artistic and cultural discourse has evolved in tandem with new trends in documentary modes of performance. A number of recent documentary films and plays have become highly reflexive and critical of the possibility of achieving authenticity or objective witnessing of past events, and this new self-questioning holds implications for human rights objectives, often linked to truth-telling, the clarification of the past, and the presentation of evidence.[23] In pairing documentary film and theatre in analysis in a human rights context, students gain a more nuanced understanding of discourses relating to truth, memory, and history. They may also acquire appreciation of the ethical questions involved in the production, reception, and circulation of documentary work. And, more broadly, students will develop a deeper awareness of the relationship between the arts and human rights.

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Notes

[1] See Jordana Blejmar and Cecilia Sosa's special issue of *Latin American Theatre Review* on "Theatre on Screen, Cinema on Stage: Cross-Genre Imaginaries in Contemporary Argentina" for an in-depth analysis of this cross-pollination in contemporary Argentine theatre and film (forthcoming 2017). For examples of this performative turn in documentary film, see: Bill Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*; Michael Renov, *The Subject of Documentary*; Stella Bruzzi, *New Documentary*.

[2] Bazin and Sontag address presence, mediation, space, and time as other components in their comparative discussion of theatre and film.

[3] The alternative position, according to Sontag, recommends "the breaking down of distinctions between genres; the arts would eventuate in one art, consisting of many different kinds of behavior going on at the same time, a vast behavioural magma or synaesthesis" (35).

[4] For a discussion of border disputes between film and theatre, see Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen* (5-6).

[5] Joanna Page identifies a trend in recent Argentine film to reflect on theatre and focus centrally on the theme of performance. See also Jordana Blejmar and Cecilia Sosa's forthcoming special issue of *Latin American Theatre Review* on "Theatre on Screen, Cinema on Stage: Cross-Genre Imaginaries in Contemporary Argentina,"which explores the productive dialogue between New Argentine Film and New Argentine Theatre.

[6] For an excellent synopsis of the evolution of European documentary theatre and its impact in twenty-first century Latin American theatre, see Paola Hernández. See also Pedro Bravo-Elizondo.

[7] Roland Barthes first coined the term "reality effect" in his essay "The Reality Effect," published in 1968.

[8] See: Michael Chanan, "The Space between Fiction and Documentary in Latin American Cinema: Notes toward a Genealogy"; Bill Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*; Michael Renov, *The Subject of Documentary*; Stella Bruzzi, *New Documentary*.

[9] For a discussion of intermediality, see Patrice Pavis, *Analyzing Performance: Theatre, Dance, and Film*, p. 49. For an explanation of the distinction between intermedia and multimedia, see Greg Giesekam, *Staging the Screen. The Use of Film and Video in Theatre*, p. 8.

[10] For an engaging discussion on this dialogue between film and theatre, see Sosa and Blejmar's upcoming special issue of *Latin American Theatre Review* on "Theatre on Screen, Cinema on Stage: Cross-Genre Imaginaries in Contemporary Argentina."

[11] The autobiographical dimension is also prevalent in new documentary theatre in Latin America. See, for example, Julie Ward's nuanced analysis of the uses of auto/biography in her article "Staging Postmemory: Self-representation and Parental Biographying in Lagartijas Tiradas al Sol's *El rumor del incendio.*" See also Pablo Piedras' *El cine documental en primera persona*.

[12] Full passage in Trastoy: "La autobiografía escéncia, por obvias razones a cargo de un solo intérprete, responde a un proyecto productivo y receptivo preciso: para el realizador, es la posibilidad de balance, de armonización entre pasado y presente, entre su ser real y las máscaras de su tarea actoral; para el espectador, en cambio, significa tanto la posibilidad de llevar a su máxima realización la perversión que supone el voyerismo implícito en toda recepción teatral (en tanto puede—o cree—acceder a la intimidad ajena), como así también la de concretar un proceso de fuerte identificación con el intérprete, que le permite actualizar y revisar su propia historia personal" (127).

[13] Carol Martin expresses this sentiment when she writes, "Documentary theatre takes the archive and turns it into repertory" (*Dramaturgy* 18). And in her discussion of autobiographical theatre, Susan Bennett frames the body as an archive, calling it "the literal vessel of a somatic history" (35).

[14] Paola Hernández, "Biografías escénicas: *Mi vida después* de Lola Arias," and Julie Ward, "Staging Postmemory: Self-representation and Parental Biographying in Lagartijas Tiradas al Sol's *El rumor del incendio.*"

[15] Originally, the play was the last to be staged as part of the documentary theatre project conceptualized by Argentine theatre director Vivi Tellas, *Biodramas* (2002-2009). For *Biodramas*, Tellas had playwrights create dramatic works based on the lives of living Argentines. One of the main objectives of the project was to unsettle the notion of what constitutes the real and fictional onstage. See Pamela Brownell, "El teatro antes del futuro: sobre *Mi vida después* de Lola Arias."

[16] For in-depth analyses of *Mi vida después*, see Paola Hernández, "Biografías escénicas: *Mi vida después* de Lola Arias"; Pamela Brownell,"El teatro antes del futuro: sobre *Mi vida después* de Lola Arias"; Cecilia Sosa, "*My life after* (2009): Non-normative Acts of Mourning in the Aftermath of Argentina's Dictatorship (1976-1983)"; Mariana Eva Pérez, "Their Lives After: Theatre as Testimony and the So-called 'Second Generation' in Post-dictatorship Argentina;" and Brenda Werth, *Theatre, Performance, and Memory Politics in Argentina*.

[17] For a critical discussion of the problematical usage of the term "second generation," see Mariana Eva Pérez, "Their Lives After: Theatre as Testimony and the So-called 'Second-Generation' in Post-

dictatorship Argentina," and Jordana Blejmar, "The Truth of Autofiction. Second-generation Memory in Postdictatorship Argentine Culture."

[18] Both works were criticized for what some viewed as their frivolous treatment of the past. See Beatriz Sarlo's critique in *Tiempo pasado* and Lola Arias' comments in her interview with Ana Longoni and Lorena Verzero.

[19] See Elizabeth Jelin, "Victims, Relatives, and Citizens in Argentina: Whose Voice is Legitimate Enough?", and Cecila Sosa's insightful analysis of the origins of the 'wounded family' discourse in post-dictatorship Argentina in "Queering Acts of Mourning in the Aftermath of Argentina's Dictatorship: The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo and *Los Rubios*."

[20] Original quote from interview with Longoni and Verzero: "No es la historia de los 'hijos de', es la historia de todos, en el sentido de la historia del país, de nuestra generación, de la generación de los otros."

[21] Both Bill Nichols' definition of performative documentaries as more subjective and affective in nature (131) and Stella Bruzzi's assertion that the performative documentary "uses performance within a non-fiction context to draw attention to the impossibilities of authentic documentary representation" (186) apply to *Los rubios* here. See also Joanna Page's analysis of *Los rubios* as a performative documentary in "Memory and Mediation in *Los rubios*: A Contemporary Perspective on the Argentine Dictatorship."

[22] Original quote by Arias: "Eso es muy extraño y atractivo de la obra, pensar que todo el tiempo los sentidos se van modificando no sólo con la historia de ellos, sino también con la historia del país" (6).

[23] The possible combinations of documentary films and plays are endless and depend largely on the focus of the course as well as the instructor's expertise. In my courses, I have found the following pairings to be very productive. Patricio Guzmán's documentary films work well with the plays *Villa/Discurso* by Guillermo Calderón in the context of Chile's post-dictatorial memory politics. The urban intervention and installation *Testigo de ruinas*, by the theatre collective Mapa Teatro, pairs well with the documentary film *Agarrando pueblo*, by Carlos Mayolo and Luis Ospina, to discuss poverty and displacement in Colombia. And in Argentina, the documentary film *Estrellas* by Federico León can be considered in tandem with works such as Vivi Tellas's play *El precio de un brazo derecho* in the analysis of class, labor, and marginalization. I should note that some of the works inevitably blur the boundary between fiction and documentary, making questions of authenticity and truth claims that much more complex.

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