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Argentina's desaparecidos

BY THE WORLD · SEPTEMBER 21, 2009 · [POST A COMMENT](#)

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Film Director Juan Mandelbaum is a native of Argentina. After learning that an old girlfriend of his was among the thousands of people who “disappeared” during the Argentinian dictatorship, Mandelbaum decided to investigate what happened to her and to some of his old friends during that time. The result is the documentary “Our Disappeared” or “Nuestros Desaparecidos” which debuts on Public Television’s Independent Lens series tonight. Marco Werman talks with Mandelbaum.

- [Independent Lens: ‘Our Disappeared’](#)
- [‘Our Disappeared’ homepage](#)



To hear another excerpt of Marco Werman’s interview with filmmaker Juan Mandelbaum (including a discussion about the US’s position on the Argentinian dictatorship of the time) click here:

Audio clip: Adobe Flash Player (version 9 or above) is required to play this audio clip. Download the latest version [here](#). You also need to have JavaScript enabled in your browser.

TAGS: ARGENTINA, DICTATORSHIP, DISAPARECIDOS, DISAPPEARED, INDEPENDENT LENS, JUAN MANDELBAUM, JUNTA, MILITARY, PBS

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DISCUSSION

5 COMMENTS FOR “ARGENTINA’S DESAPARECIDOS”

I heard the commentator on "The World" interviewing the director, and he began by stating the "30,000 desaparecidos...", etc, etc.



The 30,000 figure is a bit inflated. Even ex-Montoneros like Fernandez-Mejjide — whose son was killed by the Junta — has stated that the number is less than 10,000.

I will watch the movie b/c I am interested on the subject.

I expected better from "The World". I think that throwing numbers around w/out hard facts to back them up is plain lazy reporting, not to mention irresponsible and sensationalist

POSTED BY **LISANDRO NAVARRA** | [SEPTEMBER 21, 2009, 4:37 PM](#)

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Lisandro, with more time we could have gotten further into the issue of the number of disappeared. In the film I say "up to 30,000" given that no one, not us, not Graciela Fernandez-Mejjide (certainly not an ex-Montonera), knows the exact number. Declassified US embassy cables from 1977 (well before the end of the repression) relay Argentine military information claiming over 22,000. The official names with plaques at the Memory Park are around 9,000. Ultimately it was a huge number of people who were disappeared, and only the military who killed them know the exact number.



POSTED BY **JUAN MANDELBAUM** | [SEPTEMBER 21, 2009, 5:25 PM](#)

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The 'Dirty War' has troubled me deeply over the years; I cannot explain with precision why, as I've never even been to Argentina. Whenever there is an article, a discussion, or like today, a radio program (and tonight, a film) about 'Los Desaparecidos', I have to just pause and cry for them: the families and the victims. It is not a particularly bad experience; but a sad one. There is somehow a deep connection; and it just will not go away. We *DO* cry for you, Argentina!



POSTED BY **MICHAEL J. ROSEBERRY** | [SEPTEMBER 21, 2009, 6:06 PM](#)

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I remember a news report in 1995 stating that an Argentinean general confessed on his deathbed revealing the policy of throwing naked captives from military planes over the sea. He said the method had been chosen after consultation with senior church officials as to the most humane way to rid the country of radicals and "liberation theology" heretics. Have any church officials admitted their complicity in the disappeared atrocities in Argentina?



What about Chile? Also, didn't the anti-Peron junta follow the same template laid down three years earlier in Chile by Pinochet with the approval of Kissinger and the Nixon administration? Were church officials consulted there, as well?

When singers hands were chopped off in Chile, was it a sort of religious punishment, similar to Sharia law? Was it like having a nose and ears cut off in Afghanistan by the Taliban as a punishment for voting?

POSTED BY **WILL** | [SEPTEMBER 22, 2009, 1:49 AM](#)

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There is no agreement on the actual number of disappeared. The Asamblea por los Derechos Humanos (APDH) estimated the number of disappeared as 12,261, which included "definitive disappearances" and PEN detainee survivors of the clandestine detention centres spread throughout Argentina. The Montoneros admitted losing 5,000 guerrillas killed, and the ERP admitted the loss of another 5,000 of their own guerrillas killed. The Argentine security forces cite 775 deaths of their own.



POSTED BY **CARLOS GARRIDO** | [SEPTEMBER 25, 2009, 11:12 PM](#)

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