

1999. All of this is evidence, if more was needed, of how the wedding of feminist and post-colonial scholarship can produce work that is critical, engaging, and sharp.

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Temma Kaplan, *Taking Back the Streets: Women, Youth, and Direct Democracy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

As the current attempts to bring former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet to trial for the atrocities committed during the 1970s make clear, too often justice is a lengthy process and an elusive right. When Pinochet is finally brought to justice, our attention will undoubtedly be focused on the brutality of state terror. In giving such regimes a history, it is incumbent upon us to also remember the thousands who stood in opposition to them. In her latest book, Temma Kaplan, Rutgers University historian and author of several books on social and political movements in Spain, insists that we remember the Pinochet regime from this angle. Through female and youth movements that fought injustice and forgetfulness in Chile, Argentina, and Spain, Kaplan explores the recent histories of three countries that witnessed some of the worst civil rights abuses in the latter half of the twentieth century. This book recounts the ways that women and young people came to confront such regimes and demand accountability, and is a forceful exploration of the rituals of resistance.

Taking Back the Streets is a survey of the political action taken by women and youth in the context of the repressive regimes in Chile, Argentina, and Spain in the years known as the transition to democracy. The book's opening chapters relay the centrality of gender to both repression and resistance. Descriptions of the physical torture of Chilean women considered a threat to Pinochet in the mid 1970s are reminiscent of the atrocities visited upon women in war-torn parts of the world today. Kaplan identifies women who survived physical torture and sexual abuse to bring their stories first to each other, and then to the attention of the world. Despite their vulnerability and humiliation, women organized, spoke out, and eventually took to the streets. Collectively – and as women – they organized, for example, as Women for Life. Throughout the 1980s, in the difficult years of “protected democracy” in Chile, women used their gender identity – and a popular organizing date, International Women's Day – to mobilize for human rights, equality, and democracy. The demonstrations around this March celebration, according to Kaplan, helped transform “ordinary Chilean women from fearful housewives to militant combatants” (100).

Women and youths, Kaplan argues, staged public demonstrations in order to put forward their “versions of the truth” (6). This study focuses on the political nature of history and storytelling at a time when forgetting had become a national imperative. In 1988, Chilean women, using the plebiscite as an opportunity to fight against collective amnesia and launch a visible opposition to Pinochet’s outrageous candidacy, staged a mass silent protest. Wearing symbolic black, they quietly brought silhouettes and signs to remember the disappeared, and in leaving these reminders of the brutal regime behind, forced the media and the public to acknowledge their history and experience of the Pinochet era (97). Mothers of “disappeared” children in Argentina also refused to forget and demanded an accurate official version of the past that did not simply leave out the generation of youth that was effectively erased by Triple A forces which declared war on ‘subversives’ including working-class youth and leftists (107).

In the case of Argentina, the excruciating, frustrated searches for disappeared children “turned parents into social activists” (103). Tens of thousands of Argentines went missing in the 1970s, many of them in their 20s and 30s; some of them with children of their own, most of them with anguished parents. Although public resistance to the military junta was extremely dangerous, in 1977 mothers began a powerful ritual of resistance, meeting weekly at the same time in the Plaza de Mayo, in what is now a well-documented episode in women’s fight against state terror. Later, during the 1990s, their grandchildren, the sons and daughters of the disappeared, also took to the streets, demanding that those responsible be held accountable. Rather than permitting Argentina to forget the generation of their parents, these ‘survivors’ of the repressive regime sought to promote the message of social justice their parents were killed for. Their street demonstrations were motivated by a desire to acknowledge and counteract the legacy of authoritarianism in Argentinian society and politics but mostly to correct the fact that too many of those responsible for the atrocities of the 1970s and 1980s were living with impunity. Working largely under the Children for Identity and Justice against Oblivion and Silence these activists were responsible for mounting public shaming spectacles.

It is in her chapter on Argentina where Kaplan demonstrates the connections between the actions of women and youth. In Chile and Argentina, mothers and youth groups used noisy opposition to target the enforced silence demanded by repressive juntas. They tracked down torturers who were never brought to justice and employed tactics such as, in Argentina, the ‘escrache’ and in Chile, the ‘funa’. The former effectively robs the guilty of their attempts at anonymity; the latter similarly connotes unveiling of something, such as truth. In a typical scene this charivari-like action involved crowds gathering at the home or workplace of a known torturer or an Operation Condor participant. The noisy “outing” of the guilty party ensured that neighbours and the public

were made aware of their identity.

In the final chapter of the book, Kaplan turns to Spain. In 'Demonstrating to Remember in Spain' she examines the politics of the last years of Franco's government and women's efforts to shape the country's democratic future and address the profound gender inequality in the fascist era. Here, too, women and youth grapple with a collective desire to bury the past.

The repressive and violent regimes of Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s and the interminable reign of Franco in Spain left a death toll that is barely comprehensible. These regimes, though, produced resistance movements, sometimes consisting of unlikely participants like women and youth who lacked basic civil rights and who were firmly excluded from the public arena. That Pinochet may yet face justice has depended on the courageous opposition movements fomented in dangerous times. This book is a testament to the importance of feminist and left-wing organizing from the 1970s to the 1990s. Kaplan demonstrates the critical role of physical ritual in protesting locally and globally, across languages and cultures. While this book lacks the visual images she purports to be so central to direct action, she may be forgiven. Here she has given us the stories of individual women and young people who lost so much but who risked their own lives by using their bodies to tell stories their oppressors and history denied.

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John D. French, *Drowning in Laws: Labor Law and Brazilian Political Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

Drowning in Laws starts by rejecting the substitution of purported class interests and behaviours for the words that express them (discourse). From that point French launches two premises. First, social conflict finds expression through speech. Second, the law is a crucial focal point for that expression. Combining methods in labour, cultural, and legal history the book starts chronologically with the 1943 Consolidation of Labour Laws (CLT) under corporatist and ostensibly pro-worker president Getulio Vargas. French maintains that as an amalgam of worker protections and advances the CLT was illusory. During the six decades that followed, workers became concerned with transforming the ideals behind the CLT into reality; they quickly came to see their country as "drowning in laws but starving for justice" (152). Drawing on a broad array of strong primary and secondary sources, French shows how workers used the CLT as a weapon to achieve social justice. He breaks down, refor-