

27.1



ISSN: 1409-469X

Diálogos

Revista
Electrónica de Historia



Mural "El agua bajó, las marcas quedan", Asamblea Vecinal Parque Castelli, esquina de 66 y 26, La Plata (2014). La frase también da título al libro-documental producido por la misma asamblea sobre la inundación del 2/04/2013, donde se explica el origen de la expresión.

Enero-junio 2026

url: <http://revistas.ucr.ac.cr/index.php/dialogos/index>



UNIVERSIDAD DE
COSTA RICA

EDITORIAL
UCR

DOSSIER

DOING MEMORY, DOCUMENTING DISASTERS. THE COMMEMORATION OF THE PALOMARES 1966 AND THE BUFFALO CREEK 1972 DISASTERS IN DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Cécile Stehrenberger
María Escobar-Aguir

Abstract

This paper examines how public commemorative practices can challenge the strategic production of ignorance surrounding disasters. Focusing on three documentaries—*Broken Arrow 29* (Dina Hecht, 1986), which revisits the 1966 Palomares disaster, and *Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act of Man* (1975) together with *Buffalo Creek Revisited* (1984), both directed by Mimi Pickering and addressing the 1972 Buffalo Creek disaster—we analyze how counterimages generated by these films confront official accounts and dominant interpretive frameworks. We argue that the documentaries illuminate the extent to which disaster imagery is embedded in asymmetrical power relations and becomes a site of contestation between state and corporate authorities and disaster-affected communities. In addition, this paper investigates how these films portray scientific and technological practices and expose mechanisms of ignorance production. Ultimately, we explore how scientific discourses and practices—both narratively and materially—can participate in forms of violence or, conversely, serve as instruments of critique, resistance, and collective memory-making.

Keywords: disaster studies, memory studies, counterimages, agnology

Received: December 09, 2025 Accepted: May 07, 2026

Cécile Stehrenberger • German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Bonn, Germany; Centro de Investigaciones Históricas de América Central, Universidad de Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica.
E-mail: cecile.stehrenberger@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5515-4897>

María Escobar-Aguir • Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET), Buenos Aires, Argentina.
E-mail: mariaescobaraguir@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4522-123X>



HACIENDO MEMORIA, DOCUMENTANDO DESASTRES. LA CONMEMORACIÓN DE LOS DESASTRES DE PALOMARES (1966) Y BUFFALO CREEK (1972) EN DOCUMENTALES

Resumen

Este artículo examina cómo las prácticas conmemorativas públicas pueden desafiar la producción estratégica de ignorancia sobre desastres. Nos centramos en tres documentales —*Broken Arrow 29* (Dina Hecht, 1986), que regresa al desastre de Palomares de 1966, y *Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act of Man* (1975) junto con *Buffalo Creek Revisited* (1984), ambos dirigidos por Mimi Pickering y dedicados al desastre de Buffalo Creek de 1972— para analizar cómo las contraimágenes generadas por estas películas confrontan relatos oficiales y marcos interpretativos dominantes. Sostenemos que estos documentales ponen de manifiesto hasta qué punto las imágenes del desastre están incrustadas en relaciones de poder asimétricas y se convierten en un campo de disputa entre las autoridades estatales y corporativas y las comunidades afectadas por el desastre. Además, este artículo investiga cómo estas películas retratan prácticas científicas y tecnológicas y ponen al descubierto mecanismos de producción de ignorancia. En última instancia, exploramos cómo los discursos y las prácticas científicas pueden participar, tanto narrativa como materialmente, en formas de violencia o, por el contrario, ser instrumentos de crítica, resistencia y construcción de memoria colectiva.

Palabras clave: estudios de desastres, estudios de memoria, contraimágenes, agnotología

INTRODUCTION

It's Friday late on the summer side of this West Virginia town, wishing it was another West Virginia town, maybe on some other West Virginia riverbank. Riverbank beautiful as autumn in your mind. Here in this \$75 room, I remember things and more things. I've forgotten nothing. My thoughts are as clear as the empty vodka bottle on my windowsill. I remember a dusty afternoon lunch in the churchyard 10 years ago. Every detail as close as it can be to me, my thoughts run ragged. One right after another, like seconds and minutes that turn into hours and days. Thoughts and thoughts that turn into nightmares. The point in your life where thoughts take the place of time passing. That old license plate on the wall calls out a past best forgotten. And I've forgotten now some names of those I knew, some faces of misplaced people. Those people are lost to me, and I've forgotten a Friday night rain and a Saturday morning pain. No particular Saturday morning. I said I'd forgotten that. I can't remember the dead dogs I pulled out of the mud in houses, wishing and hoping and good God above praying it wasn't some child still warm, yet stiff from the mud. I said, I can't remember the watermarks on houses condemned and the watermarks on people condemned and the watermarks zigzagging the mountain sides for 10 miles down the hollow. I've forgotten this story of poor Ms. Withrow buried to the neck for hours and saying a prayer thanking the good Lord she had survived, telling the sickened workers not to worry. She was worn. God had taken care of her while she waited. And I've forgotten the look in Mr. Johnson's eyes on that Saturday morning. The way stared at me laying down in that rubble like that genitals torn completely off his naked, tormented body. It showed in his eyes when I shook him, asking him for an answer. I swear it did. I swear damn it, I can't forget. Not this late in the night...

— Gail Amburgey, survivor of the Buffalo Creek flood (Pickering, 1984).

The opening sequence of *Buffalo Creek Revisited* (1984), directed by Mimi Pickering, features this poem by Gail Amburgey, which articulates the enduring effects of the disaster that began to unfold on February 26, 1972, when a coal waste dam owned by Pittston Coal Company collapsed in Logan County, West Virginia, releasing nearly 500,000 cubic meters of black wastewater. The torrent destroyed 16 towns (namely Saunders, Pardee, Lorado, Craneco, Lundale, Stowe, Crites, Latrobe, Robinet, Amherstdale, Becco, Fanco, Riley, Braeholm, Accoville, Crown, and Kistler), killing 125 people, injuring over a 1,000, and leaving nearly 4,000 homeless.

These early scenes establish the film as a commemorative intervention that interrogates the social and technological conditions that enabled the disaster. The documentary, finished 12 years after the dam collapsed, displays a remarkable assemblage of Amburgey's poem, pictures of the flood, music and sounds of the wastewater crashing into the town and the screens, as well as photographs of community members prior to their disappearance in the flood. Such intermedial play foregrounds the temporality of the disaster and the complexity of the multiple forms of violence it unleashed

and exacerbated. 12 years after the flood, Gail's proclamation of not having forgotten constitutes a performance through which she both reiterates her remembrance and the possibility of forgetting. The film articulates this inability to forget through a powerful interpellation directed at the reader, the viewer, and those responsible for managing the disaster, urging them not to forget, while also exposing the fragmented, non-linear, and contradictory character of memory processes.

As we will explain in this article, the film—like other contemporary voices, emerging mostly from the realm of social and medical science, namely psychiatry and psychology (Church, 1974; Erikson, 1976; Lifton & Olson, 1976; Rangel, 1976; Winget et al. 1981, among others)—develops the argument that people like Gail cannot or are unwilling to forget what happened on February 26, 1972. This is because the violence of the wastewater was followed by other forms of violence: the displacement of a large number of people from their homes in order to place them into trailer camps for a prolonged period of time; the “loss of community” addressed both in the film and in the scientific literature, which caused what sociologist Kai Erikson (1976) described as a second, social disaster; and the epistemic injustice of the lack of recognition (Fricker, 2018) of what was a widely shared understanding of the causes of the collapse.

While numerous survivors, scientific experts and the filmmakers attributed the collapse to corporate negligence, the Pittston company characterized it as an “act of God”. The epistemic injustice of lack of recognition was thus paired with the epistemic violence of ignorance production. Already in its opening scene, through the poem by Gail Amburgey, the film suggests that this lack of recognition aggravates suffering and intensifies trauma, anticipating insights later developed in trauma theory by scholars such as Cathy Caruth (1996).

From that perspective, we analyze disaster commemoration as an epistemic practice that asserts and disputes truth claims while negotiating different types of knowledge, including scientific knowledge. We also investigate how commemorative practices operate by both questioning and mobilizing expertise and by presenting counternarratives, creating and disseminating counterimages. More specifically, we examine Mimi Pickering's first and second documentaries on the Buffalo Creek disaster, namely, *Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act of Man* (1975) and *Buffalo Creek Revisited* (1984).

Moreover, we compare and connect this cinematographic commemoration with that of the Palomares “incident”, which occurred on January 17, 1966, when a B-52 strategic bomber collided mid-air with a KC-153 tanker plane during a routine refueling operation of the US Air Force over the Spanish village. The collision caused the release of four thermonuclear bombs—one fell into the sea, where it remained “lost” for eighty days, and two ruptured upon impact and dispersed plutonium contamination over 400 hectares of farmland and coast. The collision was quickly framed as under control by both the Franco regime and the United States, despite the secrecy surrounding the cleanup operations, the search for the fourth bomb and the long-term

environmental risks. To reassure the population and protect the image of Spain abroad, Tourism Minister Manuel Fraga Iribarne famously staged a public swim off the Palomares coast with U.S. Ambassador Angier Duke for NO-DO¹ cameras and foreign press. This image has become emblematic of the disaster, to a degree where it has up to this day overshadowed alternative images of not only what happened in Palomares but also in other disasters of the Franco dictatorship (Stehrenberger, 2025).²

The political performance of downplaying or downright denying the danger emanating from contamination through hyper-masculine corporal demonstration has over the last decades been paralleled on various occasions. Examples include Trump's demonstrations of strength after COVID-19 hospitalization (Sterhenberger, 2025) or the video of Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and three Cabinet ministers, released by the Japanese government, eating Fukushima fish sashimi on August 30, 2023 (Associated Press, 2023). This last image sought to counter the concerns of fishing groups and neighboring countries and prove that the release of treated radioactive wastewater from the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant meltdown was safe for the Japanese population. Many recent studies on this disaster attribute its causes to deliberate and systematic ignorance of the potential for tsunamis or other human-caused accidents, and even of industry regulatory procedures and practices (Acton & Hibbs, 2012; Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission, 2012). Kohta Juraku and Shin-Etsu Sugawara (2021), in fact, denounce that a crucial structural ignorance and negligence mechanism of Japanese society was maintained and aggravated by the disaster.

In addition, several authors have, in the past years, focused on Fraga's bath and other elements of the disinformation media campaign the Francoist regime launched together with the U.S. American Army, analyzing the production of ignorance in the days, months and years following the aircraft collision (Vilarós, 2004; Howard, 2015, 2016, 2017; Herrera Plaza, 2015; Herrera Plaza & López Arnal 2019; Moreno Izquierdo, 2016; Mateo Alcaraz, 2017; Florensa, 2018, 2023, 2024a, 2024b; Abreu Colombri, 2022). Following Proctor and Schiebinger (2008), we understand ignorance as a desired end product of strategic processes that deploy a series of activities to make, maintain, and manipulate (mis/dis)information.

In this sense, ignorance should not be reduced to a simple lack of knowledge, as it constitutes an actively produced and strategically maintained form of unknowing (Proctor & Schiebinger, 2008). Agnotology studies reveal how mechanisms and practices traditionally associated with the production of knowledge have been reconfigured and redirected to produce outcomes aligned with industrial interests, thus demonstrating and denouncing how institutional interests shape narratives of nuclear disasters resorting to established power networks to deliberately fostering ignorance and false knowledge (McGoey, 2012; Oreskes & Conway, 2010; Proctor & Schiebinger, 2008; Downer, 2014; Fernández Pinto, 2017).

The documentaries studied in this article reveal that, in the disaster cases they portray, the epistemic violence of ignorance production is paired with mnemonic

violences, that is, the privatization, expropriation and extraction of social memories by state actors and corporations, in an attempt to foreclose spaces of contestation and suppress plural voices and counternarratives (Stehrenberger & Blázquez, 2025). Together, these violences contribute to the slow nature of the disasters addressed in this article. As we will argue, the documentaries here examined not only portray the relationship between ignorance, (public) forgetting and disaster temporality, but also seek to intervene in it. For the directors, Mimi Pickering and Dina Hecht, commemorating means making truth claims regarding the ongoingness of the disasters in order to demand present and future action to stop it, therefore negotiating the power of social imaginaries.

In this regard, the concept of social imaginaries, defined as collectively held assumptions, representations, and narratives concerning social relations and practices, as well as a society's temporal orientations toward past, present, and future (Anderson, 1983; Castoriadis, 1975; Appadurai, 1990; Taylor, 2003), has served as a productive analytical framework (Sato, 2017). Such imaginaries have a direct impact on the resilience capacity of a given group, as they bind its members through shared accounts of the past and conceptions of belonging (Hall & Lamont, 2013). Sociotechnical imaginaries—understood as visions of desirable futures that are collectively maintained, institutionally anchored, and publicly enacted (Jasanoff, 2015)—have also proven useful to understand the different ways in which societies conceive and relate to science and technology.

Disaster commemoration can be understood as a form of memory work³ (Jelin, 2002) that constitutes a form of remembrance, forging connections to the past by creating bonds with previous generations, thereby sustaining a group's cultural and historical self-understanding and continuity. As a social practice, it enables groups to apprehend themselves as coherent and enduring, reinforcing the significance of a shared past, which, in turn, becomes embodied in commemorative practices (Escalante Solís & Carrillo Trujillo, 2014).

Moreover, disaster commemoration can be understood as an epistemic practice that generates, communicates and challenges knowledge concerning the causes, the ontological status and the effects of a disaster (Stehrenberger & Blázquez 2025). As such, it has the potential to defy existing power structures that cause disasters in the first place and deepen their destructive force over time, denouncing negligence and even animosity against certain populations. In this sense, commemorative practices deploy a series of mechanisms that facilitate remembering, guard meaning, and provide victims and disaster-affected populations with a framework (Halbwachs, 1976) that accommodates and gives meaning to their experience and knowledge, while counteracting the ignorance-producing measures and policies that seek to silence them and discredit them.

Facing the slow unfolding of the Palomares and the Buffalo Creek disasters, these two women directors took upon themselves the commemorative practice of producing counterimages and, ultimately, counternarratives that challenge the

censorship and disinformation campaigns imposed by state or company authorities in their attempt to avoid accountability and keep their power. By contesting dominant narratives and making victims' testimonies visible, the directors disclose the multilayered symbolic dimensions of post-disaster imagery.

In this paper, we will address how public commemorative practices can counter ignorance-production strategies by examining the counterimages displayed by three documentaries: *Broken Arrow 29* by Dina Hecht (1986) on Palomares 1966, and *Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act of Man* (1975) and *Buffalo Creek Revisited* (1984), both directed by Mimi Pickering on Buffalo Creek 1972. The hypothesis is that these documentaries demonstrate that disaster images are embedded in asymmetrical power structures and are simultaneously sites of dispute between official institutions and impacted populations, thereby engendering interpretive shifts that reconfigure the meaning of the past. The analysis further examines how these documentaries portray science and technology, defy ignorance production regarding disasters and produce counter-knowledges. We will ultimately examine how scientific discourses and practices—in their narrative and material dimensions—can emerge from and contribute to different forms of violence, or else function as criticism and resistance against it.

This paper delves into three documentaries considered both as sources and objects of study, which calls for a brief consideration on the particularities of the task. Reflecting on the work of Jennifer Fay, Jessica Barker (2024) asserts that

fabricated screen worlds [...] are complicated by the spectator's double consciousness of what lies beyond the frame. On the one hand, there is the story world that viewers' imaginations extend beyond what they see: on the other, there is the material world that, on some level, they always know to be surrounding what the camera captures (p. 71)

Such as filmed venues and actors, screenwriters, producers, technicians and working teams. In this sense, Barker (2024) argues that any given film offers a storytelling which attempts to create cohesion between the fragmented realities it portrays. Yet the material world disrupts this apparent coherence, producing a web of intersecting stories and experiences, at once real and imagined. It is from these tensions and dynamics that the socio-cultural and socio-ecological 'functions' of this corpus emerge.

A) *BROKEN ARROW 29* (1986), BY DINA HECHT

The film, directed by Israeli filmmaker Dina Hecht and broadcast by UK Channel 4 in 1986, documents the Palomares disaster twenty years after the aircraft collision. Beyond narrating the incident itself, the testimonies gathered in the documentary trace the ensuing two decades, during which the immediate violence of the explosions gave way to the slow environmental violence of plutonium contamination. These testimonies attest to a disaster memory which, stemming from a shared traumatic past, articulates a demand for justice in the present. The combina-

tion of social, political, and epistemic forms of violence that followed, together with such slow environmental violence, produced a slow disaster whose destructive force unfolded gradually over the landscape and within the local population—communities made particularly vulnerable by the structural violence of inequality, oppression, and extractivism (Stehrenberger, 2023).

This disaster has, indeed, been conceptualized as a product of colonial-like relations between the Francoist regime and the U.S. government. The Duchess Medina Sidonia, Isabel Álvarez de Toledo, one of the most prominent defenders and spokesperson of the victims of the Palomares disaster, also adhered to this conceptualization—after settling in Palomares immediately after the collision and becoming deeply invested in the lives and struggles of the inhabitants, she wrote that the U.S. military operated in Spain with as much freedom as if it were a colony (Álvarez de Toledo y Maura, 2001). The so-called ‘Red Duchess’ was not the only one to have such concerns in the midst of debates on the referendum that would determine whether Spain would remain in NATO (Florensa, 2018). In Hecht’s documentary, lawyer Amedino Armada remarks that the Franco regime’s conduct toward the United States resembled that of a colonized power in relation to its colonizer, thus framing Spain’s Cold War diplomacy within a dynamic of dependency and subordination.

During the Cold War, the United States indeed operated as a settler colonial state, its territorial foundations rooted in the dispossession of Indigenous peoples and its geopolitical influence extended through the occupation and control of territories across Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. The thermonuclear detonations carried out in these regions prior to the so-called Palomares “incident” exemplify the colonial logic that motivated and justified the creation of “sacrifice zones”.

This critique can also be found in other historical contexts related to Palomares, such as anti-OTAN protests and their iconography. The characterization of the United States as a settler colonial state finds visual expression in murals through the frequent depictions of white U.S. Americans selling weapons to Indigenous peoples, such as a mural of the San Agustín Neighbourhood in Madrid depicting a missile that turns into a Indigenous tent while the Spanish President Calvo Sotelo is portrayed as an Indigenous key listening to a U.S. American officer (Quaggio, 2021). This characterization is also present in environmental conflict contexts. As Pablo Corral-Broto (2013) observes, the 1970s saw the emergence of a colonial denunciation of the Francoist regime and foreign multinationals’ practices of control and management of local natural resources. This critique also extended to regional and social inequalities, the lack of democratization in decision-making processes, and the absence of reliable environmental information as part of an elitist form of governance.

The documentary denounces the extent to which certain lives were understood as disposable (Butler, 2004) based on how science was performed at the time, informed by this colonial power dynamic. Scientific racism rationalizes and legitimizes exploitative and extractive violence against populations construed as ‘others’

in such colonial order (Stehrenberger, 2020). Hecht's documentary opens with video footage of cleanup operations in Palomares, which reveal the inadequacy of the scientific rationale behind these protective measures: contaminated soil and vegetation were stored in a temporary disposal pit and burned together with winter crops, while highly contaminated soil and vegetation were packed into barrels and shipped out of Spain. The technology used for monitoring this material was, as claimed by the documentary, deficient, as the Alpha radiation counter used in these operations is "notorious for its high failure rate" (Hecht, 1986). According to the director, the counter was employed repeatedly until its measurements indicated that the soil met safety standards. She also includes images of the decontamination certificates issued to landowners, which asserted that their properties were contamination-free. A man from Villaricos who worked to clean the collision debris recounts in minute 14:38 that Villaricos workers were instructed to work at night to hide cleanup operations from Palomares inhabitants and, when they requested appropriate protective clothing to handle such materials, they were told to either proceed bare-handed or leave.

Such is also the example of Ana Josefa López, whose house was hosed down by U.S. soldiers after the collision. She recounts in Hecht's documentary (Ana Josefa López interviewed in Hecht, 1986):

Colonel Ramos said: 'Take it off and throw it away.' I said to him: 'I don't have another [one].' So he said: 'Wash it with Omo and put it on again.' As if washing it with Omo could remove radioactivity!

The health implications of house whitewashing were associated with long-term carcinogenic and mutagenic outcomes, as it effectively sealed radioactive particles into the house facades. Ana Josefa López's son, Luis Castro López, was later mistreated and negligently assisted by a physician who failed to treat him for the leukemia he had developed as a result of the plutonium contamination.

In addition, in the minute 7:57 of Hecht's film shows a quote by Drs. Edward Teller and Albert Latter, two physicists who worked together for the United States Air Force Scientific Advisory Board and co-authored the controversial book *Our Nuclear Future: Facts, Dangers, and Opportunities*, published in 1958. By juxtaposing the cleanup footage with the two physicists' statement claiming that the development of powerful weapons entailed little radiological risk, the film seeks to elicit a profound response from viewers. Dr. Wright Langhman of the US Atomic Energy Commission appears later on camera explaining that 'a number of fortunate circumstances' guaranteed that Palomares inhabitants and soil were only minimally exposed to radiation. Moreover, Francisco Mingot of the Spanish Nuclear Energy Board explains in minute 20:23 that this organization was, at the time of the collision, under the authority not of a scientist but of a military man, in representation of the Air Force, reducing the Board to a mere counsellor.

Hecht's documentary denounces the labeling of Palomares inhabitants' lives as "disposable" and shows that a mere economic compensation and basic cleanup

operations not only are insufficient but also stem from that same racism that marked them as “sacrificable” in the first place. Her counternarrative is powerful in that it clearly shows state authorities’ reluctance to produce scientific knowledge that actually sought to understand and remediate the consequences of the disaster. Instead, state authorities and associated science entities concealed the consequences of the collision and radioactivity contamination, further aggravating the impact of the disaster in the Palomares population. This constitutes a clear example of undone science (Frickel et al., 2010), understood as areas of research which, identified as valuable by social movements or civil society organizations, are nevertheless unfunded or neglected, further advancing ignorance.

Dina Hecht produced thus a commemorative practice that proves the complex temporality of the disaster, challenging the traditional ‘event’ approach as it denounces the lack of state accountability both during and long after the disaster. The deliberate absence of effective state measures to carry out a proper decontamination and provide essential post-disaster healthcare for the Palomares population did, indeed, extend the consequences of the disaster for decades.

The documentary *Broken Arrow 29* connects the enduring legacy of the Palomares disaster to the persistence of certain structures and practices of the Francoist dictatorship beyond Spain’s transition to democracy—a transition the film portrays as fundamentally incomplete. The documentary advances this argument both explicitly—through statements made by interviewees and by the director herself—and implicitly—through its dramaturgy, visual composition, and montage techniques.

A central continuity that the film not only asserts but also visualizes concerns structures of power and the continued prominence of specific political actors. “Look, the regime has changed. But it hasn’t really changed. They’re the same people as before”, says Lorenzo González, an inhabitant of Palomares. Asked to elaborate, Ana Josefa adds: “The same crowd still runs the show”. Hecht (1986) herself makes clear who this ‘crowd’ refers to. Near the end of the documentary, the viewer once again encounters Manuel Fraga, whose smiling face and bare torso had appeared earlier in archival footage from 1966, when he and the U.S. Ambassador staged their famous bath in the Mediterranean to reassure both Spanish and international journalists that the waters remained safe despite the presence of a missing hydrogen bomb. This scene, as the film emphasizes, became the iconic image of the disaster and of the regime’s attempt at damage control.

Whereas *Broken Arrow 29* briefly reproduces the footage of Fraga’s bath from 1966 earlier in the film, one of its final sequences shows him twenty years later, now fully clothed and seated behind a large desk that visually symbolizes his continued centrality within Spain’s post-transition political landscape. Hecht (1986) herself remains visible during the interview, foregrounding the filmmaking process rather than concealing it through seamless editing. The contrast between the two appearances of Fraga—first as the energetic public face of Francoist propaganda, later as an established democratic statesman—serves to underscore the documentary’s claim

that political transition did not fundamentally transform the country's underlying power structures.

Beyond emphasizing personal continuities, Hecht (1986) also points to continuities in modes of governance. As the director remarks in voice-over: "Much has changed in Palomares: earlier people were told what was what by generals and the Regime; now they are told what is what by their very own homegrown civilian talent". The "homegrown civilian talent" to which Hecht refers is Palomares's young socialist Mayor, Antonia Flores. The documentary eventually accuses Flores of manipulating the inhabitants of Palomares into supporting Spain's continued membership in NATO, thereby enabling the United States to maintain the military infrastructure in Spain that the film identifies as the underlying cause of the 1966 collision.

Toward the end, the documentary insinuates that Flores and her political allies organized commemorative events and public assemblies in 1985 that encouraged residents not to abandon their claims for compensation related to the damages suffered in 1966, primarily in order to gain political popularity. According to the film, Flores subsequently mobilized this popularity in support of the pro-NATO campaign, which proved highly successful in Palomares—where, as the documentary emphasizes, a substantial majority voted in favor of remaining in the alliance—and contributed to the advancement of her political career.

As both Hecht's narration and the testimonies of her interviewees verbally articulate continuities between the Francoist past and Spain's not-yet-fully democratic present, the film's editing techniques reinforce this argument visually. Throughout the documentary, images from 1985 repeatedly blend into archival footage from 1966 and vice versa, collapsing temporal distance and suggesting the persistence of political and social structures across the supposed rupture of democratic transition.

Hecht's documentary, therefore, constitutes a commemoration practice that renders visible the slow unfolding of disaster violence, as well as colonial, gender and racist violences, in the present and future. Its counterimages and, ultimately, counternarrative nourish a sentiment of resistance that enables new and dissident memories and knowledge.

B) BUFFALO CREEK: AN ACT OF MAN (1975) AND BUFFALO CREEK REVISITED (1984), BY MIMI PICKERING

I didn't see God a drivin' them slate trucks and wearing a hard hulled cap. I did not see that at no time when I visited the dam. I don't believe it was an 'act of God,' it was an act of man!

— Shirley Marcum, survivor of the Buffalo Creek flood (Pickering, 1975).

In response to widespread skepticism regarding the adequacy and trustworthiness of the Governor's official investigation into the Buffalo Creek disaster, a coalition of West Virginian citizens created the Citizens' Commission to Investigate the Buffalo Creek Disaster and called Mimi Pickering to record its proceedings. Pickering's documentary constructs a counternarrative to official accounts by weaving together survivor testimonies, statements from labor and community representatives, and corporate officials with footage of hearings, cleanup operations, and striking visual evidence of destruction by the flood. As the inquiry progresses, the film *Buffalo Creek: An Act of Man* (Pickering, 1975) exposes the systemic negligence of the Pittston Company—whose executives had been warned of the dam's instability and that its structure was in violation of both state and federal safety regulations. Despite clear indications of negligence, the Pittston Company invoked divine causality to evade accountability, attributing the flood to divine will—an 'act of God.'

Pickering (n.d.) later recalled that

[t]he experience of being on Buffalo Creek was physically and emotionally draining for all of us. I left the area feeling horribly depressed and wondering how we could use the film and video we had shot to tell such a difficult story [...] As I learned more about the events preceding the tragedy and the responses of company and government officials afterwards, I became strongly convinced that the Buffalo Creek disaster was an outrageous example of an industry-wide attitude that places a greater value on profits and production than on the health and safety of coal miners, their families, and their communities. (pp. 1-2)

Through testimonies, the film highlights a clear contrast between the attitudes of the communities and the company in the face of the disaster. While Pittston senior employees fled the area before the flood, survivors attest that neighbours went around their towns warning fellow inhabitants that the dam had cracked, showing strong bonds of solidarity and empathy. Indeed, Thomas N. Bethell, Research Director of United Mine Workers of America, affirms on film that "Pittston knew 24 hours in advance that the water was rising ominously and steadily" and that Pittston officials had been checking on the dam and warned their boss, Steve Dasovich (as cited in Pickering, 1975).

According to Bethell, Dasovich "decided to reassure people downstream that nothing was gonna happen and left the area, and was on his way out of the valley when the dam did go" (as cited in Pickering, 1975). In painful contrast, a survivor in tears recounts on film that his home door was knocked that morning by neighbours running 'around like crazy trying to warn everybody the dam had broken' (as cited in Pickering, 1975). He himself recalls having warned more neighbours while leaving the area with his family.

Thomas Bethell also explains that three reports on the disaster were produced shortly after the flood: a general account by the Bureau of Mines, a second by a dam expert from the Bureau of Reclamation, and a third prepared by dam experts from the Geological Survey. According to Bethell, all three reports share that the dam showed building limitations and reveal the shock of investigators at the inadequacy

of the dam. This also came as a shock as, five years earlier, the Interior Department, following a waste-bank slide in Aberfan which killed 116 children in 1966, had warned state and local officials that the waste pile on Buffalo Creek was unstable and could be hazardous if affected by large amounts of water. In addition, the documentary shows a fragment of a news article that states that, two years after the Buffalo Creek flood, at least 8 coal waste piles were still rated as “severe hazards”.

Towards the end of the film, two psychiatrists are cited, namely Dr. Albert Recio and Dr. June Church. Their findings signal deep distress in the area’s communities: survivor’s guilt, migraine, hypochondria, neurosis, violence, and denial, among other serious symptoms of trauma. Several testimonies, news clippings and reports collected by Pickering’s documentary show that, while scientists and experts were consulted before and after the dam collapse, they were ignored by state and company authorities—that is forms and reports were commissioned and later disregarded.

Pickering’s first documentary of the Buffalo Creek disaster is ultimately a film on accountability, as all efforts are concentrated in denouncing industry-state collusion to avoid responsibility for the destruction of the Creek communities. Her second documentary on this disaster, produced twelve years after the flood, shows a different approach. From the first few minutes of the film, there is a clear focus on the long-term consequences of the disaster. Trauma is now clearly portrayed. The first scene of the documentary shows a poet presenting a performance about the impossibility of forgetting, and her recital is accompanied by images of polluted water, photographs of the deceased, and a very intense, deafening sound.

Very much like in the first documentary, most testimonies are given by women, who, by recalling the strong solidarity bonds of their now destroyed and dismantled communities, serve as guardians of memory not only of the disaster but of a world that no longer exists. Their testimonies lament the loss of their community and show the impact of such loss in the lives and bodies of themselves and future generations.

Dr. June Church appears on screen this time and offers his expert views on the traumatic consequences that the disaster bears for survivors of the flood, which included emotional and psychophysiological problems, such as alcoholism, depression and anxiety. The film does indeed articulate the massive psychological impact of the different dimensions of the Buffalo Creek disaster through several distinct yet interconnected languages. There are, first, tears, gestures, and spoken testimonies through which survivors both describe and embody their suffering. There is, second, the specialized terminology of psychological and psychiatric discourse employed by the expert interviewed in the film, whose clinical language serves to identify, categorize, and explain the trauma he observes.

The documentary also develops a specifically cinematic language through its distinctive montage techniques. This includes an elaborate composition of sounds ranging from slow-paced country music to the piercing and unsettling noises accompanying the reading of Gayle’s poem. These auditory elements are combined with heterogeneous visual materials: archival footage from before, during, and after the

collapse; still images that freeze victims in time; and moving images that juxtapose the violent speed of the crashing water with the slow and restrained facial expressions of survivors giving testimony. This cinematic language does not merely represent trauma; it produces a sensory experience that is itself disturbing, painful, and haunting. Through the interplay of sound, rhythm, and visual montage, the film creates an affective dimension that powerfully reinforces the verbal statements made throughout the documentary.

Dr. June also recounts having been consulted on survivors' relocation strategies, when he strongly suggested keeping prior, existing groupings together. His professional opinion was, however, ignored—families were randomly allocated in trailers and long-dated communities were disbanded and broken up, causing further distress among survivors, aggravated by the fact that, at that time in the U.S. people who lived in trailers were looked down on (Founds, 2020). The 'homey atmosphere' described by one of the survivors, Ruth Morris from Lindale, was lost, and replaced by feelings of distrust and deep loneliness among relocated families.

Mimi Pickering's films, which reproduce a scientific discourse in which the memory of disasters—and the impossibility of forgetting them—is key, constitute an epistemic commemorative act. Drawing on existing scientific knowledge, her documentaries denounce the fact that this knowledge, as in Palomares, has not been implemented and it demands further research into both the origins and consequences of the disaster.

Like Dina Hecht's, Pickering's commemoration is also an epistemic act, as it makes truth claims concerning the temporality of the disasters. *Buffalo Creek Revisited* depicts the ongoingness of the disaster, defying its classification as a temporally- and spatially- bounded event, which was the hegemonic definition of disasters during the 1970s and 1980s (Usón & Stehrenberger, 2025). Moreover, it highlights how practices of ignorance production and forgetting actually contribute to this ongoingness, causing the second disaster of "loss of community", through the displacement of inhabitants into trailer homes, together with all the (mental) health implications it triggers.

The production of ignorance and forgetting has allowed the actors responsible for the disaster to avoid acknowledging their causal role, assuming responsibility, and providing survivors with the assistance they require. Concerning the nuclear disaster of Palomares, Hecht's film illustrates that the politics of forgetting and ignorance production have permitted the ongoingness of the nuclear contamination, effective still today. Combating it is also the object of more recent productions of counterimages, like in the case of John Howard's work (2016). His photography of current-day queer culture in Palomares sheds light on the sex industry that sprung from the difficulties faced by the fishing and agricultural activities because of the radioactivity contamination, as well as from a "'Fuck, it we're gonna die anyway' attitude" (Howard interviewed by Abraham, 2016). In this way, Howard's

photography not only denounces how lives are still threatened by the continuity of the disaster, but also renders different forms of resistance emerging from community-based solidarity visible.

CONCLUSIONS

Pickering and Hecht's films contend official accounts on the disaster, which sought to impose a one-dimensional narrative. Their commemorative practice aims at endorsing a counternarrative with political legitimacy by amplifying silenced voices that can shed light on invisibilized disaster memories. Such counternarratives of the disaster thus expose the human and environmental costs of extractive industry practices and reveal the psychological and social toll of displacement and loss.

This paper has evidenced the potential of memory practices surrounding disasters to put into question the relationship between past, present, and future, denouncing entangled inequalities stemming from a shared colonial past. In this sense, commemorative practices such as these strain traditional understandings of the temporality of disasters, questioning who is allowed to practice memory and when they can do so. Moreover, this paper has highlighted the interconnectedness of knowledge and image circulations and the agencies of both substances and discourses that traverse media—from science to pop culture and clinical practice—while also crossing geographical and political borders. Their analysis requires the combination of a wide range of methodological tools, articulating classic deconstructivist perspectives with those focused on materialities which emerged in the 1970s from actor-network theories and new feminist approaches, among others. This paper has attempted to demonstrate that such a complex analysis must also contemplate environmental history, science and technology studies, media studies, and, especially, disaster memory studies.

The documentaries addressed in this article have provided counterimages that challenge the production of ignorance, problematize the category of “accident” to refer to these disasters and critically revise the role played by science and technology in their slow development. Indeed, produced years after the so-called “onset”, these films shed light on and denounce the ongoing nature of these disasters. Mimi Pickering and Dina Hecht produced films that confronted hegemonic narratives of past disasters, shedding light on their ongoing consequences. They amplified voices and images that made sense with disaster victims' experience rather than with government or company authorities' official versions. In so doing, both directors introduced a counter-storytelling that acknowledges the slow character of both disasters, as well as authorities' attempts to conceal them. As a result, the directors have helped produced counterknowledges that show that both in Palomares and Buffalo Creek such disasters unfolded affecting population and lands that had previously

been conceived as sacrifice zones by governments and companies who build their power at the expense of colonial logics of othering, extractivism and exploitation.

The contrast between official and counternarratives has also proven useful to understand the potential of commemorative practices in the production of interpretations of the disaster and the production of meanings around it. While states and companies' memory practices seek to secure their power by deploying a set of ignorance-production measures that confine the disaster to the past, alternative memory practices denounce its ongoingness in the present and the entanglement of its multiple causes. The documentaries here analyzed have proven to be comprehensive enough to address the complex social struggles, especially those led by women, that dispute the establishment of a monolithic, single memory that does not accommodate their experiences.

By no means does this imply that the commemorative work performed by the films analyzed can be understood as an epistemic practice that reveals all dimensions of the disasters. Nor should these documentaries be mistaken for works of memory that successfully assemble and articulate every element of the memory assemblages that have been, and continue to be, produced through individual and collective practices situated within different sociocultural spheres. On the contrary, both films also involve exclusions and omissions whose further analysis would constitute a highly interesting research object for further studies.

From this broad and comprehensive perspective, new lines of research can be explored, as the stories analyzed here have not come to an end. Furthermore, Hecht's and Pickering's documentaries were recently discussed in different contexts, from YouTube channels to commemorative ceremonies, at a time deeply marked by the COVID-19 disaster, which had an undeniable impact on interpretations of the recent past. Future research could connect the documentaries analyzed in this article to films commemorating disasters in other regions of the world, such as Latin America, thereby developing a comparative or entangled analysis of the ways in which colonial constellations and colonial continuities—both as underlying conditions of disasters and as factors shaping the responses to them—are made visible through cinematic practices.

NOTES

- 1 Noticiario Cinematográfico Español [Spanish Film News], created by agreement of the Spanish Vice-Secretariat of Popular Education on September 29, 1942.
- 2 On other ecological disasters of Franco's Spain, see *Académie des sciences* (2012), Corral-Broto (2013, 2015); Hamilton (2017, 2018); Prádanos (2018); Seguí (2019); Guillem-Llobat & Nieto-Galan (2020); Mihic (2020); and Guarnieri et al. (2021).

- 3 The continuous processes by which groups actively (re)interpret memories of the past, encouraging critical reflection on the connections between memory, justice, and the future.

REFERENCES

- Abraham, A. (2016, April 26). Remembering the Time America Nuked Spain by Accident. *Vice*. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/photos-from-that-time-america-nuked-spain-by-accident-palomares/>
- Abreu Colombri, J. A. (2022). Fuentes orales, fondos hemerográficos y divulgación de los estudios históricos del franquismo: el caso de estudio del accidente nuclear de Palomares. Entrevista a José Herrera Plaza. *Entremons*, (13), 209–224. <https://doi.org/10.31009/entremons.2022.i13.11>
- Académie des sciences. (2012). *The major accident at Fukushima Seismic, nuclear and medical considerations*. EDP Sciences. https://www.edp-open.org/images/stories/books/fulldl/major_fukushima.pdf
- Acton J. M., & Hibbs, M. (2012). *Why Fukushima Was Preventable*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/wps/ceip/0024580/f_0024580_20077.pdf
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities*. Verso.
- Álvarez de Toledo, L. I. (2001). *Palomares (Memoria)*. UNED.
- Appadurai, A. (1990). Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy. *Public Cult.* 2(2), 1–24.
- Associated Press. (2023). *Japan PM Kishida eats Fukushima fish to dispel worries after water release* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkBt__MFf74
- Barker, J. (2024). Out of Frame: Filming the Anthropocene and Other “-cenes” in *Alcarràs* (Carla Simón) and *As bestas* (Rodrigo Sorogoyen). *Resistance; A Journal of Radical Environmental Humanities*, 12(1), 69–91. <https://doi.org/10.1353/res.2024.a966097>
- Butler, J. (2004). *Precarious Life. The Power of Mourning and Violence*. Verso.
- Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Castoriadis, C. (1975). *The Imaginary Institution of Society*. MIT Press.
- Church, J. S. (1974). The Buffalo Creek Disaster: Extent and Range of Emotional and/or Behavioral Problems. *OMEGA — Journal of Death and Dying*, 5(1), 61–63. <https://doi.org/10.2190/THAB-GJ8F-GRRM-L6K1>
- Corral-Broto, P. (2013). Sobre la sociedad ambiental. Un intento de decolonizar el franquismo y el desarrollismo desde Europa. *Historia Ambiental Latinoamericana Y Caribeña (HALAC) Revista De La Solcha*, 2(2), 133–159. <https://www.halacsolcha.org/index.php/halac/article/view/289>
- Corral-Broto, P. (2015). *Protesta y ciudadanía. Conflictos ambientales durante el franquismo en Zaragoza (1939-1979)*. Publicaciones de Rolde de Estudios Aragoneses.

- Downer, J. (2014). *In the Shadow of Tomioka On the institutional invisibility of nuclear disaster*. Centre for Analysis of Risk and Regulation at the London School of Economics and Political Science. <https://www.lse.ac.uk/accounting/assets/CARR/documents/D-P/Disspaper76.pdf>
- Erikson, K. T. (1976). *Everything in Its Path. Destruction of a Community in the Buffalo Creek Flood*. Simon and Schuster.
- Escalante Solís, L., & Carrillo Trujillo, C. (2014). Que el olvido social no nos gane: prácticas sociales conmemorativas en Latinoamérica. *Revista Liminales. Escritos Sobre Psicología Y Sociedad*, 3 (06), 19–34. <https://doi.org/10.54255/lim.vol3.num06.250>
- Fernández Pinto, M. (2017). To Know or Better Not to: Agnotology and the Social Construction of Ignorance in Commercially Driven Research. *Science & Technology Studies*, 30(2), 53–72. <https://doi.org/10.23987/sts.61030>
- Florensa, C. (2018). James Bond, Pepsi-Cola y el accidente nuclear de Palomares (1966). In L. Camprubí, X. Roque, & F. Sáez de Adana (Eds.), *De la guerra fría al calentamiento global: Estados Unidos, España y el nuevo orden científico mundial* (pp. 17–35). Catarata.
- Florensa, C. (2023). El accidente de Palomares. Las estrategias mediáticas de invisibilización del riesgo nuclear. *Mètode*, 2(117), 4–9. <https://metode.es/revistas-metode/article-revistas/el-accidente-de-palomares.html>
- Florensa, C. (2024a). *El desastre de Palomares*. Ministerio de Política Territorial y Memoria Democrática. https://digital.csic.es/bitstream/10261/394659/1/desastre_Palomares.pdf
- Florensa, C. (2024b). ¿Un Contador de Cuerpo Entero para Palomares? Las otras utilidades de la «estrella» del Proyecto Indalo. In J. R. Bertomeu Sánchez, A. Nieto-Galan, & C. Florensa (Coords.) *Agnotologías. Saberes e ignorancias en la España del siglo XX* (pp. 121–158). Editorial Tirant Lo Blanch.
- Founds, K. M. (2020). *“We Had Become Trailer People”: Stigma, Social Boundary Making, and the Story of the American Mobile Home Park* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Kentucky]. Uknowledge. https://uknowledge.uky.edu/sociology_etds/48
- Frickel, S., Gibbon, S., Howard, J., Kempner, J., Ottinger, G., & Hess, D.J. (2010). Undone Science: Charting Social Movement and Civil Society Challenges to Research Agenda Setting. *Science Technology, & Human Values*, 35(4), 444–473. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243909345836>
- Fricker, M. (2018). Epistemic Injustice and Recognition Theory: A New Conversation —Afterword. *Feminist Philosophy Quarterly*, 4(4), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.5206/fpq/2018.4.6235>
- Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission. (2012). *The official report of The Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission*. The National Diet of Japan. https://www.nirs.org/wp-content/uploads/fukushima/naaic_report.pdf
- Guarnieri, F., Portelli, A., & Tomoko, T. (Eds.). (2021). *Masao Yoshida, directeur de Fukushima*. Presses des Mines.

- Guillem-Llobat, X., & Nieto-Galan, A. (2020) *Tóxicos invisibles: La construcción de la ignorancia ambiental*. Icaria.
- Halbwachs, M. (1976). *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*. Mouton.
- Hall, P. A., & Lamont, M. (2013). Why social relations matter for politics and successful societies. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 16(23), 1–23. <https://scispace.com/pdf/why-social-relations-matter-for-politics-and-successful-5e5m221yoa.pdf>
- Hamilton, S. R. (2017). *Environmental change and protest in Franco's Spain, 1939-1975*. *Environmental History*, 22(2), 257-281. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44202427>
- Hamilton, S. R. (2018). *Cultivating Nature: The Conservation of a Valencian Working Landscape*. University of Washington Press.
- Hecht, D. (Director). (1986). *Broken Arrow* 29 [Film]. Channel 4.
- Herrera Plaza, J. (2015). *Accidente nuclear en Palomares: consecuencias (1966-2016)*. Arráez Editores.
- Herrera Plaza, J., & López Arnal, S. (2019) *Silencios y deslealtades: El accidente de Palomares: desde la Guerra Fría hasta hoy*. Laertes.
- Howard, J. (2015, January 16). The Nuclear Disaster You Never Heard of. *Time*. <https://time.com/3671475/palomares/>
- Howard, J. (2016). *White sepulchers. Palomares disaster semicentennial*. Publicacions de la Universitat de València.
- Howard, J. (2017). *The American Nuclear Cover-up in Spain*. Eccles Centre for American Studies: The British Library.
- Jasanoff, S. (2015). Future imperfect: science, technology, and the imaginations of modernity. In S. Jasanoff & S.-H. Kim, *Dreamscapes of Modernity: Sociotechnical Imaginaries and the Fabrication of Power* (pp.1–33). University of Chicago Press.
- Jelin, E. (2002). *Los trabajos de la memoria*. Siglo XXI Editores.
- Juraku, K., & Sugawara, S. (2021). Structural Ignorance of Expertise in Nuclear Safety Controversies: Case Analysis of Post-Fukushima Japan. *Nuclear Technology*, 207(9), 1423–1441. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00295450.2021.1908075>
- Lifton, R. J., & Olson, E. (1976). The human meaning of total disaster: The Buffalo Creek experience. *Psychiatry*, 39(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00332747.1976.11023872>
- Mateo Alcaraz, M. D. (2017). Secreto de estado, medio ambiente y salud. El caso ‘Palomares’. *IUS ET SCIENTIA*, 3(1), 172–182. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12795/IETSCIENTIA.2017.i01.16>
- McGoey, L. (2012). The logic of strategic ignorance. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 63(3), 533–576. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2012.01424.x>

- Mihic, T. (2020). *Re-imagining Japan after Fukushima*. ANU Press.
- Moreno Izquierdo, R. (2016). *La historia secreta de las bombas de Palomares. La verdad sobre el accidente nuclear silenciada durante 50 años*. Crítica.
- Oreskes, N., & Conway, E. (2010). *Merchants of doubt: how a handful of scientists obscured the truth on issues from tobacco smoke to global warming*. Bloomsbury.
- Pickering, M. (Director). (1975). *Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act of Man* [Film]. Appalshop.
- Pickering, M. (Director). (1984). *Buffalo Creek revisited* [Film]. Appalshop.
- Pickering, M. (n.d). *Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act of Man*. https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/national-film-preservation-board/documents/buffalo_creek.pdf
- Prádanos, L. I. (2018). *Postgrowth imaginaries: new ecologies and counterhegemonic culture in post-2008 Spain*. Oxford University Press.
- Proctor, R., & Schiebinger, L. (2008). *Agnotology: the making and unmaking of ignorance*. Stanford University Press.
- Quaggio, G. (2021). Walls of Anxiety: The Iconography of Anti-NATO protests in Spain, 1981–6. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 56(3), 693–719. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27067746>
- Rangell, L. (1976). Disaster at Buffalo Creek. Discussion of the Buffalo Creek disaster: the course of psychic trauma. *The American journal of psychiatry*, 133(3), 313–316. <https://doi.org/10.1176/ajp.133.3.313>
- Sato, K. (2017). Japan's Nuclear Imaginaries Before and After Fukushima: Visions of Science, Technology, and Society. In J. Ahn, F. Guarnieri, & K. Furuta (Eds.), *Resilience: A New Paradigm of Nuclear Safety* (pp. 195–206). Springer.
- Seguín, B. (2019). Environmental Apocalypse and the Spanish Crisis Novel. *Hispanic Issues On Line*, 24, 272–288. <https://hdl.handle.net/11299/212955>
- Stehrenberger, C. S. (2020). Annobón 1988. Slow Disaster, Colonialism, and the Franco Dictatorship. *Art in Translation*, 12(2), 263–287. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17561310.2020.1791451>
- Stehrenberger, C. S. (2023). Disaster, Coloniality, and the Franco Dictatorship. In L. Prádanos (Ed.), *A Companion to Spanish Environmental Cultural Studies* (pp. 179–187). Boydell & Brewer.
- Stehrenberger, C. S. (2025). Más allá del baño de Fraga: Repensando el desastre de Palomares y sus imágenes. In I. Plasencia Camps, M. Alonso, & Riveiro and L.A. Mateo Leivas (Eds.), *Políticas de la experiencia. Visualidad y memoria del franquismo*, Madrid: Abada (pp. 245–272). Abada Editores.
- Stehrenberger, C. S., & Blázquez, J. (2025). Disputas por la memoria y la producción de conocimiento. Reflexiones en torno a algunas escenas de desastre en América Latina y Europa. In U. Capdepón,

A. P. Brito, J. Kemner, & O. Maisterra Sierra (Coords.), *Memorias urbanas en conflicto en América Latina y Europa* (pp. 247–273). CALAS/CLACSO.

Taylor, C. (2003). *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Duke University Press.

Usón, T. J., & Stehrenberger, C. S. (2025). Disasters as time, time as disasters. In R. Staupe and M. G. Bartoszewicz (Eds.), *A Time of Disastrous Anticipations. Essays on Life in the Shadow of Catastrophe* (pp. 64–83). Routledge.

Vilarós, T. M. (2004). El baño del ministro y el embajador: Fraga y Duke en Palomares, 1966. *Res publica*, 13-14, 247–262. <https://revistas.um.es/respublica/article/view/59861/57671>

Winget, C., Green, B. L., & Gleser, G.C. (1981). *Prolonged Psychosocial Effects of Disaster: A Study of Buffalo Creek*. Academic Press.