

God, Art, and Suffering in *Dios no nos quiere contentos*

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The reading of Griselda Gambaro's novels elicits conflicting emotions in the reader due to the coexistence of the physically abnormal or the exaggeration of violence with a matter-of-fact, almost jovial narrative tone. Both physical and social conditions in her narrations often seem unrealistically cruel to the point of distortion, yet the victims of cruelty accept their treatment as inevitable and even "normal." Her works provoke a mixed reaction of laughter and horror by their simultaneous evocation of the laughably exaggerated and the terrifyingly or disgustingly monstrous. If, as she claims, she depicts life both as it is and as it could be, the latter is suggested chiefly by its absence.

Gambaro's body of narrative work¹ belongs to a time of political turmoil in Argentina. Military coups in 1955, 1966, and 1976 claimed to be restoring Argentina's Western Christian values while in fact subordinating the individual's rights to those of the state. Francine Masiello summarizes Argentine narrative works during this period as deconstructive of the dominant narrative and the official discourse associated with it, often by means of the inclusion of multiple discourses of resistance; the exploration of spaces allowed to the individual; and particularly the human body as object of the regime (Balderston *et al* 23-24). Gambaro acknowledges openly the political content of her works. She examines in her works the dynamics of power and victimization, both within the family and in a larger social context. Rather than acquiesce to "that perverse system of thought in which people become abstractions," she presents the concrete suffering of the human body, broken and distorted. She claims that in today's society life is undervalued and the public anesthetized to social disregard for humanity:

Nuestro destino ha terminado por ser abstracto La imaginación no funciona, no podemos imaginar la “corporeidad” con todo lo que la corporeidad significa Tal vez el destino último del arte sea éste: desanestesiarse.” (Schnaith 49)

Our destiny has ended up being abstract The imagination does not work, we are unable to imagine “corporeity” with all that corporeity signifies Perhaps the ultimate destiny of art is this: to de-anesthetize.²

As a vehicle for that de-anesthetizing, Gambaro has chosen techniques from the Argentine theatrical tradition of the *grotesco criollo*, which by its tragicomic presentation degraded the pretentiousness of the foundational myths of the social system as it depicted the degradation of the individual. It arises out of the general grotesque tradition, which includes the use of specific structural and stylistic elements that result in abnormalities or unresolved tensions within the work itself, in order to elicit a clash of incompatible emotions in the reader. The grotesque has proliferated in times of crisis and has often served as a subversive device to question the discourse of authority. Wilson Yates has observed that it is particularly apt for the representation of a twisted, fallen humanity that yet retains its created goodness, and for the coexistence of the already and the not-yet as transforming grace appears in the midst of human brokenness (Adams and Yates 65-68).

In Gambaro’s works the grace operative amid pain and despair tends to appear as human compassion and remembrance. By taking others into account and by preserving their memory, art stubbornly works to lend significance to human existence in the face of a forgetfulness imposed by a repressive society. God’s love and justice are questioned or dismissed; since he does not appear to vindicate or console, the artist attempts to assume that responsibility. Although it is essential for remembrance and compassion, art is ultimately powerless to erase helplessness and heartbreak, which points to a need for a help for the helpless beyond human capabilities.

In *Dios no nos quiere contentos* [*God Doesn’t Want Us Happy*], Gambaro examines the significance of art as response to human suffering. The almost unbearable tension between the beauty of art and the ugliness of cruelty and pain is largely responsible for its grotesque nature. The female protagonist, the Bareback Rider,³ questions the benevolence of God as she witnesses and experiences suffering under deadly and duplicitous authority

figures, yet her art as testimony arising out of pain and its reclaiming of crumbling, shattered spaces offer a paradoxical vision of hope in the presence of death.

In this 1979 novel, the boy Tristán loses his adoptive family when their house falls in on them. Reluctantly taken in by the neighbors, he is befriended by their daughter María and eventually falls in love with her. When María's aunt, the Bareback Rider, visits the family, she invites them to the circus, where Tristán is spellbound by her acrobatic act. He goes to live with her and the baby they inherit when the child is separated from his mother on a crowded bus. The Bareback Rider moves from one run-down circus to another, eventually becoming a trapeze artist. She falls in love with a destitute man who has stolen most of her belongings; he does not return her love and the Baby and Tristán attempt to support themselves and her by selling pictures of saints and by doing odd jobs. Tristán's attempts to look up María finally result in finding her at the house of prostitution, where the customers force Tristán to perform sexually with her. The years go by, the Baby gets married, has a child and dies, and María ends up running a small grocery store where Tristán visits her but seems to go unrecognized. Throughout his life, Tristán's response to pain and humiliation is his desire to learn to sing. Years later, Tristán is reunited with the Bareback Rider at the deserted house of prostitution, where he finally finds his voice.

Within the narrative, the Bareback Rider's acrobatic art on the trapeze and the art of song—both hers and Tristán's—flow out of and constitute a response to human suffering. The circus becomes a microcosmic representation of the dynamics of power, the suppression of memory, and the deceitful public face of a repressive regime. The circus act as spectacle is the intersection of art and society: the artist, forced to operate within the existing power structures, acts upon them through the artistic production. The spectators, simultaneously shaped by both art and society, are drawn in two directions at once.

Although the Bareback Rider performs in many circuses throughout the novel, the same characters reappear in each: the Boss and the strong man, the clown, and José and Pepé, the aging trapeze artists. The Boss is not always clearly the same person, but his behavior remains consistent with former incarnations, much as the behavior of one dictator resembles that of another. Repeated characters and actions underline the paradigmatic nature of the circus, explicitly recognized by the Bareback Rider—"Bien sabía que el circo, desdoblado en muchos, era uno solo" (252) [She knew very well that the

circus, unfolded into many, was only one]—and confirmed by Gambaro herself as identifiable with her homeland (Morell 489). In it the powerful are right by virtue of their power and the weak are wrong because of their weakness (111). The dynamics of power in the circus closely mirror the structure of Argentina's military dictatorship, reflected in the novel's general atmosphere of fear and hopelessness. The tactics pursued by the Boss also reflect key elements of the military regime's attempts to manipulate public opinion. The authorities hired a public relations firm to present a seductive image of Argentina to the world (Feitlowitz 159) while torturing and killing thousands of suspected subversives; the circus boss pretends to weep at Pepé's death (247) and insists that his former lover died the way she wanted to (197). The fact is that he has engineered Pepé's demise by designing a stunt impossible for the two weak old men to accomplish and has forced the mother of his children to undertake a tightrope act without a net and fall to her death. His repeated assertions that nothing has happened recall the news blackout imposed by censorship in the 70's.

The Boss's concern for a good public image, like the military regime's, is apparently rewarded with success. Beyond the false front, however, the more serious concern is not only his manipulation of the truth but his suppression of memory. The spectators, unwilling to accept the horrible death which they have just witnessed, are relieved and easily distracted by the clown's comic clumsiness while the body is removed (196-97). Even the Bareback Rider, misled by the absence of a body, begins to question the reality of the woman and of her fall from the tightrope (198). The elimination of physical evidence in this case parallels the Argentine authorities' concealment of tortured bodies by digging unmarked mass graves or by throwing them from airplanes.⁴ This attempt to induce forgetfulness and impose an official version of recent events is repudiated in the novel by the Bareback Rider, conscious that memory is what constitutes personhood (198). The artist bears witness to the presence of pain and to the memory of the fallen.

Eduardo Grüner suggests that art is what builds the memory of humankind, and that where art chooses to direct its gaze fixes the priorities of a culture (17-18). Since political power has depended on art to select the collective memories most convenient to it through its choice of images, it follows that the artist may opt to display an image at crosspurposes to that power. Indeed, Grüner posits that art has often depicted the material body to combat its disappearance into fetishized abstraction, so essential to the survival of ideologies. Here he is at one with Gambaro, who has expressed her determina-

tion to prevent the conversion of human beings into abstractions.

Surrounded by terror and suffering, the artist can speak through her art only when she opens her heart to them. As the Bareback Rider learns to look at others and really see them, her art acquires maturity and transcendence, and she is only able to teach Tristán that he can sing when this art also becomes compassionate. She undergoes a process of maturation from the self-absorbed, haughty person who is only interested in others if they admire and flatter her to someone who weeps at the sadness in the world because she loves human beings (149). The pain of love and death translates into her most superb performances: as she carries her audience with her in spite of their trepidation to unknown regions beyond life and death, she repeats to herself: “Bebé, a tiempo te moriste” [Baby, you died at the right time], and it is now her pain and his memory, rather than the sense or nonsense of life, that sustains her (220).

Although the Bareback Rider’s art soars unexpectedly from amid the sordid machinations of the circus, she continues to feel oppressed and conditioned by it. She resists the tendency to follow its tinny music (238) instead of her own, which arises from her compassion (191), and she recognizes that there is no escaping a world that is always exchanging lies for the truth (250). In the circus as mirror of society, the Boss insists after both deaths that nothing has happened, yet the ideas of pain as preserver of memory and of the persistent presence of the dead have already been introduced within the text. As the Bareback Rider walks toward the circus, she focuses on the horizon, below which the dead continue to move:

... tenaces y sin querer el olvido, los muertos van y vienen,
como grandes peces en el mar. Próximos y secretos, como
para que una palabra los aleje. (178)

... tenacious and unwilling to be forgotten, the dead come
and go, like great fish in the sea. Nearby and secret, as if a
word might chase them away.

It hardly seems a coincidence that when referring to guerrillas during the military repression, the specific wording of official policy was to prevent their free circulation “like fish in water.”⁵ This oblique reference to the presence of the fallen in the mind of the artist reinforces the value of art as testimony. Beyond other forms of memory, pain keeps its essence alive:

Bajo el llanto resecado, conservaría la memoria. Y aun si

perdiera la memoria, sabía que el dolor tiene su propia memoria insobornable. (148)

Beneath dried up weeping, she would retain memory. And even if she were to lose her memory, she knew that pain has its own incorruptible memory.

The Bareback Rider is determined to counter the denial of the meek woman's life and death. In this she embodies—literally—the transformation of the ugliness of pain into a testimony of the human heart's stubborn refusal to forget. Tristán, however, has had from the beginning a more intuitive grasp of the counterbalance of suffering and sweetness, of the way art speaks to misery even as it cannot take it away. His repeated failures vividly portray the artist's inadequacy in the face of horror; his dogged persistence is evidence of a consuming need to communicate; his final success at the place of his deepest humiliation is emblematic of the miraculous appearance of art where it seems most unlikely.

Tristán is initially too wounded to reach out even to himself, much less to others. He senses his own utter desolation: his adoptive family is dead; he is ashamed that he has survived (14); he feels unworthy of being spoken to and completely alienated from even his own mirror image (13). All he can hope for is to be taken into account (77). Hopelessly inept, his attempts at singing are perceived as braying or choking noises, comic and desperate gargles which at best earn him a tentative smile and at worst a beating. In the scene that both opens and closes the novel, he is unable to hear himself sing and to believe himself capable of making music (7-8). It would be difficult to find a less likely figure of the artist than this virtual social outcast who hardly speaks a word during the entire story.

To choose such a broken victim of contempt and abuse, however, becomes strikingly appropriate given the setting in which the novel was written. Artists and journalists were frequent victims of imprisonment, exile, and torture in the Argentina of the late 1970's.⁶ Beatings and sexual humiliation were the rule in the illegal detention centers, and one of the most forbidding challenges presented to the detainees was to remain conscious of their own humanity and the humanity of those around them.⁷ Tristán has been deeply marked by his experiences, as is evident in his tortured dreams; nevertheless, he gradually learns to observe signs of suffering in others. His intimate acquaintance with suffering impels him simultaneously in two directions: he experiences a powerful urge to sing as a response to the pain and failure of

others, and at the same time is keenly aware of his inability to produce an appropriate and effective response.

Gambaro has told Sharon Magnarelli that *Dios no nos quiere contentos* is her answer to what was happening in Argentina at the time it was written, as well as to her own situation (128), living in exile because of the banning of her 1976 novel, *Ganarse la muerte* [*To Earn One's Death*]. The novel makes it abundantly clear that she understood the suffering and brokenness caused by the regime as well as the powerlessness of its victims to resist. Her choice of Tristán, a penniless outcast literally without a voice for virtually the entire novel, reflects the impotence she may have felt as an artist banned from speaking out in her own country.⁸ One can infer that Gambaro's response includes frustration that God allows intense suffering and seems not to want us happy, a frustration to which the Bareback Rider bears witness through her unspoken conversations with Tristán.

Tristán himself understands intuitively that pain calls for the type of response that art can provide. When faced with his own suffering and that of others, he tells himself, "Tengo que aprender a cantar" [I have to learn to sing]. He senses that art can somehow be of help, perhaps because it brings a new element to the situation (149), because it makes the human story more compassionate and clear (116), or because it can elevate the humble elements of which it is composed: "desprender las palabras de su sujeción de pequeñez y de tierra" (63) [to unfasten words from their bonds of meanness and of earth]. This image of liberation metonymically expresses the way art can draw the human soul beyond its own earth-bound experience, as in the Bareback Rider's best performances.

The grotesqueness of Tristán's art arises not so much from its inadequacy or its ugliness as from the juxtaposition of that ugliness with what he somehow knows art ought to be. He is torn between what he feels compelled to do—his calling—and its utter failure throughout most of the novel. His inner brokenness captures the brokenness of a fallen society where true communication and solidarity are the exception rather than the rule and where nothing is as it should be. The artist in such a society has a choice to make: either succumb to defeat or keep trying, however grotesquely. The Bareback Rider in her meditations sees that choice and opts, as Tristán ultimately does, for continued struggle. Although she feels that God does not want human beings to be happy and that they destroy their own existence, that the meaning of life is inscrutable (250), she chooses her own answer—that all is well:

y así como aferrándome al trapecio me desplazo en el aire y del caos del movimiento escojo los que puedo ordenar, con esa respuesta que no es respuesta me transformo y la elijo como cierta, más cierta y mía que aquella otra oculta por una sabiduría indiferente Llorá, Tristán. Todo está bien. (221)

and even as grasping the trapeze I move in the air and from the chaos of movement I choose those that I can order, with that answer that is not an answer I am transformed [I transform myself] and I choose it as true, more true and more mine than that other one hidden beneath an indifferent wisdom Weep, Tristán. All is well.⁹

That contradictory affirmation—weep; all is well—summarizes the irreconcilable tension that characterizes not only the presence of art with its healing potential in a world in ruins but also the brokenness and hunger for coherence common to all of humanity. The Bareback Rider consciously decides to construct meaning out of chaos, and to choose an answer that is not an answer and to confer certainty upon it. All is well, she decides, when we weep together; all is well when our song, like hers, is compassionate in the face of our ignorance, as Tristán understands when he finally begins to sing (253).

The Bareback Rider does not deny the existence of God; rather, she echoes David Hume's reflection on the problem of evil: "Is [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then is he malevolent." (Clark 62) Her statement that God does not want us happy comes from her love of suffering humanity and is reminiscent of the Psalmist's challenging of a God who seems to allow the misery of the innocent. A helpful way of seeing God's attitude toward suffering, however, can be inferred from Malena Lasala's thoughtful book on *Dios no nos quiere contentos*, which focuses on the concepts of helplessness (*desamparo*) and bereavement (*despojo*) as signs of the marginalization of the characters. The human word can provide the first help to the helpless (*amparo*) as it takes another human being into account, reconfiguring pain into com-*passion*, the act of suffering with another. This is the type of *amparo* that the Baby provides for the Bareback Rider as he unobtrusively coaxes her away from her sorrow. The Bareback Rider can then soar on the wings of her pain to create her aerial art as testimony to his life, and when Tristán finally joins her in singing it is after he understands that the song has to do with compassion. Lasala's reading is

reminiscent of, but does not attain, the Christian's awareness that God has conferred meaning on our existence by *his* com-passion, his willingness to suffer with us and for us in the very flesh of Christ.

Mention of Scripture is particularly appropriate here since Biblical references are a pattern in Gambaro's fiction. In *Ganarse la muerte* [To Earn One's Death] she holds up the military regime's protestations of Christianity to the Scriptural yardstick of obedience to God: both the Old and the New Testament judge societies by their treatment of women and children.¹⁰ Thus she exposes the discrepancy between words and deeds in Argentina's "Western Christian" society. In *Nada que ver con otra historia* [Totally Unrelated to Another Story], an old man in the crowd becomes a Christ figure when he interposes himself between the protagonist and the blows of police truncheons. In *Una felicidad con menos pena* [A Happiness With Less Pain], Eustaquio as parodic Christ figure underlines the dead orthodoxy of a bourgeois paying lip service to charity yet unwilling in practice to share its abundance with the poor, thus likely to incur condemnation for not providing for "the least of these" as Christ himself requires (Matthew 24:45).

In *Dios no nos quiere contentos*, Gambaro subtly associates victims with righteous Scriptural figures. Tristán recalls Noah as he dreams a flood episode in which he is able to save most of his family in a small rowboat (78-83); the Bareback Rider, like Daniel, is forced by an unjust authority figure to face a lion, which refuses to harm her (115-19).¹¹ The Bareback Rider compares the accumulation of human sufferings to those of Job (85). The undeserved pain to which these figures are subjected guides the reader toward an attitude analogous to Job's questioning of God in the face of his own suffering. Unlike Job, however, the Bareback Rider does not see God with her own eyes and repent in dust and ashes (Job 21:5-6); rather, she accuses him of hating happiness since it is made in human likeness (250). Upon closer examination this proves to be a double inversion of the creation account, where it is man—both male and female—who is created in God's image. God's pleasure in the goodness of humanity as part of creation (cf. Genesis 1:26, 31) has become here a perceived meanness of spirit on the part of a being incapable of joy and unwilling to allow human beings to experience it.

Dios no nos quiere contentos begins to consider a theme more fully developed in its 1994 sequel, *Después del día de fiesta* [After the Feast Day], where Tristán feels unable to accept the existence of an art that does not do away with suffering. For him, art is a response to life and must address it. The beauty of art, symbolized in this novel by the moon on the mountains, seems

to him completely irrelevant when it cannot transform the shantytown in which he lives into a pleasant landscape. Art's inability to change what matters most is thus at the heart of both novels. When the Bareback Rider can tell Tristán to weep, for all is well, she is expressing the same paradox seen in the final scene of the sequel, where Tristán looks beyond his squalid surroundings and sees, impossibly, the mountains. There is no apparent resolution in either novel, merely the acknowledgment that injustice and suffering both inform and contradict the artist, who is both privileged and condemned to respond to them.

Strikingly, the Tristán trilogy's concluding novel, *Promesas y desvaríos* [Promises and Ravings, 2004], has moved beyond art forms, however loosely construed, to the art of loving, accepting, and understanding others, which ties in well with Lasala's reading of *Dios no nos quiere contentos*. In the third novel, Tristán, like the Baby in the first, becomes a nurturing presence and a faithful companion to the suffering. Here, too, God appears to punish rather than reward the good, and Tristán is stabbed to death by a young boy he had taken under his wing.

Where art and pain often intersect, however, is at the point of memory. The memory of concrete bodily suffering in art, exemplified by Gambaro throughout her body of work and also in these novels, may well constitute what Tristán has in mind. The only two places where the Bareback Rider perfects her art are the circus tent and the house of prostitution, which could both be considered emblematic of Argentina under dictatorship. Marital bonds are broken, innocence is lost, and the powerless are abused in the brothel, where cynicism and numbness prevail (106-08). Despotism murders without accountability and memory is suppressed in the circus. Among the crumbling plaster, in the space where Tristán's innocent dreams were shattered, he remembers his humiliation without pain or perplexity and still allows the Bareback Rider to lift him into the air with her. They reclaim a soiled and crumbling space with their art and redeem a compromised word, *cantar* [to sing], from its weight of complicity. Marguerite Feitlowitz has compiled a list of words like *cantar* whose meaning became compromised through their association with repression, torture, and death, such as *desaparecer* [to disappear], *trasladar* [to transfer], *paquete* [package], *leonera* [lion's cage or den], *capucha* [hood], *submarino* [submarine], and *chupar* [to suck up or vacuum] (51-60). She observes, "As the wise novelist Julio Cortázar said, 'Under authoritarian regimes language is the first system that suffers, that gets degraded.' I have come to believe that, even after the regime has ended, language may be the last system to recover" (61). Although the sinister meaning of "to sing" is not restricted to

Argentina, the theme of the redemption of compromised words in a novel set in the Argentina of the Military Process is particularly relevant. In this regard, Saúl Sosnowski considers semantic restoration a way in which the artist assumes leadership in the reclaiming of values subverted by institutional terrorism (Bergero and Reati 49).

When Tristán begins to sing as he and the Bareback Rider float near the ceiling, a group of children appear in the doorway. One of them has a full head of curls like the Baby, who modeled compassion for both artist figures. Gambaro opens a window of hope by suggesting that although art paradoxically both evokes and is unable to deliver healing for a wounded society, the next generation can provide an audience for broken artists preserving memory and fostering compassion in a space shattered by repression.

NOTES

1 Gambaro has received a National Endowment for the Arts award for *Madrigal en ciudad* (1963), the Emecé Publishers Prize for *El desatino* (1964), honorable mention from Sudamericana Publishers for *Una felicidad con menos pena* (1967), a Guggenheim Fellowship for fiction in 1982, and numerous prizes, including awards from the Municipality of Buenos Aires, *Talia* magazine, *Theatrical Broadcast News*, and the Argentores Prize more than once, for her plays. She has been appointed to juries for drama competitions such as the National Endowment for the Arts prize and has lectured extensively in the United States, Latin America, and Europe (Picón Garfield 55). Her works have been translated into French, German, Czech, Polish, Italian (Betsko and Koenig 184, 197) and English. Gambaro's other narrative works are *Nada que ver con otra historia* (1972), *Ganarse la muerte* (1976), *La cola mágica* (1976), *Dios no nos quiere contentos* (1979), *Lo impenetrable* (1984), *Después del día de fiesta* (1994), *Lo mejor que se tiene* (1998), *El mar que nos trajo* (2001), and *Promesas y desvarios* (2004); she has also published *Conversaciones con chicos* (1976) and *Escritos inocentes* (1999).

2 All translations in this essay are mine.

3 Ironically, the only thing she can not do is ride bareback: she nearly falls off the horse and grabs its mane, which turns out to be painted straw and comes off in her hands (47). The utter ridiculousness of her nickname is mirrored in other equally inappropriate names: María, who is anything but virginal by the last part of the novel; Tristán, whose song is not like the legendary musician's (see Hortensia Morell's footnote on the name Tristan in "La narrativa de Griselda Gambaro: *Dios no nos quiere contentos*", 483-84); and the Baby, who is more mature than any other character even as a child. This practice of misnaming toys with the reader's expectations of a character which arise from his or her name.

4 Feitlowitz details testimony by Adolfo Scilingo regarding death flights where drugged prisoners were dropped from airplanes into the sea (195-97). Hundreds of corpses, often mutilated, were buried in graves labeled “NN” (*non nominatus*, p. 49). In the novel this possibility is suggested by the fact that the truck with the meek woman’s body takes a dirt road, the way truckloads of bodies were taken into the country to be buried (198).

5 Duhalde (75) and Feitlowitz (23) both record this phrase, originally coined by Chairman Mao.

6 See *Nunca Más*, 362 ff., on the disappearances of journalists and other writers.

7 Marguerite Feitlowitz in *A Lexicon of Terror* remarks that the victim’s horror at and alienation from their own body worked toward preventing consciousness of his or her own humanity as well as of that of the torturers (66).

8 Enrique Giordano sees the space inhabited by the characters in this novel as the space of total exile, due partially to the destabilization of identity. Giordano’s study concentrates on Gambaro’s transgression of the preestablished codes of conduct for male and female characters (31) and the rupture of human identity in the novel based on the absence or inappropriateness of names and on the absence of feminine mystique, of maternity, and of the traditional male hero. Masculine and feminine subjects do not exist as absolute categories, since the feminine functions as whatever is marginal to the masculine. This leaves the door open to a new way of being, for which he has not yet settled on a term, provisionally accepting *androgyny* as the closest equivalent. (“La trayectoria de los sujetos en *Dios no nos quiere contentos*” 31-41)

9 Morell develops a series of parallels between this novel and Voltaire’s *Candide*, with which it shares the theme that all is well (in spite of the sufferings of the protagonist), the use of humor, and many details of the plot such as the sexual corruption of the loved one, the earthquake, the correlation to historical events, Biblical parody, and the redeeming value of work (490-92).

10 See Exodus 22:22, Isaiah 1:15-17, Deuteronomy 10:18, Psalms 68:5 and 146:9, and James 1:27. In this novel the protagonist, Cledy, is an abused orphan who eventually loses her husband.

11 This particular image is simultaneously reminiscent of Argentina under dictatorship since illegal detainees, including those innocent of political wrongdoing, were usually “softened up” upon incarceration by blows and electric prodding in what was called the *leonera* [lion’s den or cage] (Feitlowitz 56).

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Calvin College, September 22-24, 2005

Keynote Speaker: Nicholas Wolterstorff, Yale Divinity School

There is growing discussion at various levels of education concerning the spirituality of teaching and learning. There have also been a variety of valuable examinations of the connections between education and a concern for justice. How do these two important areas of discussion intersect? What can each contribute to the other? Proposals for papers examining all aspects of this topic are invited. Further details can be found at www.pedagogy.net.

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