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Citation for published version (APA):
Shute, J. (2016). Bereaved Family Activism in Contexts of Mass Violence. In *Critical Victimology: Reconceptualisations, Interventions and Possibilities* (pp. 1-26). Lexington Books.

Published in:
Critical Victimology: Reconceptualisations, Interventions and Possibilities

OPEN ACCESS

European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

IN DALE SPENCER AND SANDRA WALKLATE (EDS) *RECONCEPTUALISING CRITICAL VICTIMOLOGY: INTERVENTIONS AND POSSIBILITIES.* NEW YORK: LEXINGTON. (2016)

Bereaved family activism in contexts of organised mass violence.

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There is, sadly, no shortage of 'data' for the scholar of lethal violence. Recent estimates suggest, for example, that 475,000 non-combat related homicides[i] were committed globally in 2012 (World Health Organisation 2014), and around 125,000 fatalities produced in contexts of organised violence[ii] in 2014 (Uppsala Conflict Data Programme 2015). Naturally, each death presumes one direct victim, however, the effects of an untimely and violent death on the networks of actors connected to the deceased by ties of family, friendship and work are often profound and enduring. This chapter analyses the effects of violent bereavement on family members – defined as any self-identifying relation by blood or partnership - and attempts, among the normal range of responses, to understand the organised attempts of some to address publicly aspects of their experience: what will be termed 'bereaved family activism'. We begin with a brief review of the relatively sparse literature on bereavement and lethal violence in 'peacetime' and discuss some of the typical experiences of family members who do and do not resort to activism. The discussion is then extended to contexts of lethal and organised *mass* violence – defined here as forms of inter- and intra-state armed conflict –

to consider both quantitative and qualitative differences in bereaved families' experience. Particular emphasis is given to contexts of mass violence that feature the murder and concealment of primary victims and where surviving family members must contend with profound *absences:* of official acknowledgement, information, disposal site, and body. This peculiarly harrowing set of privations understandably pushes many beyond their capacity to cope, however, organised family member responses have occurred with quite profound effects both locally and beyond. This is illustrated with regard to two contexts studied as part of a major research programme on the material human remains of mass violence. First, the almost paradigmatic case of post-Junta (1976-83) Argentina is described, in particular, the phenomena of the 'Mothers', 'Grandmothers' and 'Children' of the 'Disappeared', who evidence globally influential but surprisingly complex and contested histories of discourse and action. The second case is of post-war (1991-1995) Bosnia where a unique combination of perpetrator actions and subsequent political-administrative conditions have supported unique and still-developing forms of bereaved family (re-)action. The case studies, taken together, illustrate a little of what is to be gained from a victimological engagement with those who search and speak for the dead and highlight, *inter alia*, the strength and purpose that can be gained from collective defiance, the influence of family activism in post-conflict society building, and the tragic elusiveness of personal and collective 'closure'.

'Peacetime' bereavement and lethal violence.

'Peace' is a relative and slippery term, used here to denote the kind of circumstances that obtain domestically in nation states *not* actively engaged as primary parties in the forms of inter- or intra-state armed conflicts defined more precisely in the next section. States nominally 'at peace' under these definitions can and do, of course, experience sporadic terroristic violence, engage in systemic political repression, execute criminals, and facilitate extraterritorial armed conflict through the legal (and often profitable) exchange of military

intelligence, training and materiel. That most of these forms of violence are not captured in indices of conflict points to their definitional limitations; that they are not recorded in official statistics or victim surveys points to some essential limitations of traditional criminology (Green and Ward 2004). These caveats accepted, we will, for the sake of argument, retain this essentially negative (absence-focused) and incomplete definition of variably-peaceable 'peace'[iii].

In such conditions, and as a fundamental part of the human condition, bereavement occurs for the most part due to age-related illness and has a predictable range of culturally inflected effects on individual family members, for example, an acutely increased risk of mortality, physical and psychological morbidity (Stroebe, Schut and Stroebe 2007), and a stressed re-evaluation of relationships in the family system as a whole (Hayslip and Page 2013). While agonising and incapacitating for many, most people with time and social support, adjust to loss and often experience some level of 'post-traumatic growth' such as strengthened relationships, increased self-awareness and capacity for resilience (Michael and Cooper 2013). Contemporary Western models of bereavement echo this positive perspective, having moved from the Freudian position that a 'healthy' response to death requires emotional detachment to a constructivist emphasis on meaning-making, continuity, and an ongoing relationship with the deceased (Rothaupt and Becker 2007).

The process and relative success of adjustment is, of course, affected by many variables, not least among them, the circumstances of death. Sudden, unexpected death due to lethal violence[iv] presents particular challenges to the normal grieving process of family members. Most obviously, 'peacetime' homicide is to a significant extent *intra*-familial: of the 526 homicides committed in England and Wales in 2013/14, 35% of victims were female, 72% of whom were killed either by a current or ex-partner, or another family member (Office for National Statistics 2015). 15% of male victims were killed by a partner or family member.

As Jack Katz (1988) has shown in his analysis of US court records, such crimes are often committed after a long history of relationship dysfunction and are proximately the result of intoxicant-facilitated, in-the-moment, 'righteous' fury in response to a perceived grievous humiliation. Homicides of this nature introduce complexity into familial grieving processes due to a likely connectedness to both victim and perpetrator, and there are other characteristic experiential features that distinguish this form of bereavement (Paterson et al 2006; Rock 1998; summarised in Condry 2010). These include the difficulties of coming to terms with the shock of the unexpected event, the motivated malice or recklessness of the assailant, the horror of the real and imagined details of the killing, a general and pervasive sense of powerlessness, and extended forms of suffering attendant on the often insensitive responses of criminal justice and an intrusive media (Condry, *ibid*). Recent systematic reviews of the clinical effects of homicide on family members – also termed 'survivors', 'co-victims' and 'secondary victims' – confirms the general picture of serious disturbance, with high rates of chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, complicated grief and substance abuse (Connolly and Gordon 2014; van Denderen et al 2015).

While these experiences represent common and debilitating features of violent bereavement, it is notable that there is also considerable variation in what family members feel able to *do* with their trauma. In recent decades, and as part of a systemic politicised emphasis on increased participation of victims in criminal justice (Garland 2001; Walklate 2012), the right to make a 'victim impact statement' at the point of sentencing has been extended to family members in homicide cases. In England and Wales, an evaluation of early trials of this as part of the Victims' Advocate Scheme (VAS) indicated that a high proportion of families both appreciated and took the opportunity to make a statement, although the emotional demands of doing so meant that it was mostly read by someone other than the author(s) (Sweeting et al 2008). English Judges stressing judicial independence and steeped

in the common law tradition of distinguishing *obiter dicta* (contextualising details) from *ratio decidendi* (details direct pertinent to the legal ruling) were rather more ambivalent about its impact. Their position – that statements should not and would not affect the legal decision – is somewhat at odds, however, with a rather more extensive US psycholegal literature (for example, Myers and Greene 2004; Paternoster and Deise 2011) that suggest family statements of this nature tend to promote more punitive decisions, which themselves have potentially lethal consequences in states that retain the death penalty.

Another acknowledged but little-studied way in which bereaved family members engage their trauma is via public activism. High-profile campaigns – for example regarding community notification of sex offenders - instigated by and gaining legitimacy from the bereaved are familiar features of late modern discourse on crime and punishment (Garland 2001), and, as a number of English writers have detailed, 'grassroots' mobilisation of self-organised *groups* of family victims also exert influence (Rock 1998; Scraton 1999). Paul Rock's (1998) study describes the formation, development and co-relations of several such groups, including the still-active Support After Murder and Manslaughter (SAMM[v]). The work is notable for its sensitive phenomenological account of the ontological predicament of the bereaved and also makes clear the 'imperative for organisation' (p.133) felt by many as they attempt to impose personal and collective order on their suffering and make something positive of it. Scraton's work with the Hillsborough Family Support Group (HSFG) differs in that the deaths in question relate not to murder but to the negligence of police, local government and stadium officials that led to 96 deaths at a major football match, followed by a major cover-up and trial by media. The example is instructive for our overall purposes, however, in that it illustrates the spontaneous formation of a group focussed on a single traumatic set of events, initially for self-help but taking on a campaigning role in relation to perceived and systemic injustice. The campaign also illustrates something of the discord and

disagreement that can arise in perpetually emotionally charged settings such as these – the founding group split due to arguments about the acceptability of campaigning for *living* survivors – and also the long and fractured process of achieving recognition in the face of official denials (Scraton 2013): fresh inquests into the causes of death are ongoing at the time of writing, some 26 years after the original tragedy. These are themes to which we will return.

In sum, family bereavement as result of 'peacetime' lethal violence is seen, with some justification, as a special category of suffering that produces intense and debilitating effects. Deaths are not infrequently the result of intra-familial violence which may add further layers of incomprehension and ambivalence into the process of grieving. Studies of families have moved on from a clinically-oriented description of symptoms, syndrome and course to highlight the rupturing and remaking of meaning and identity attendant on bereavement, and it is in this light that both greater participation in criminal justice and family activism can be seen: as a renegotiation of an ongoing relationship based on advocacy for, and responsibility to the dead. Such participation is 'risky' and contested, however, and brings few guarantees of resolution.

Extension to contexts of organised mass violence.

We now leave the chimerical 'Anglo-America' of so much criminological homicide literature - where well-funded studies describe relatively rare and well-recorded events in essentially stable democratic societies - and turn to the experiences of families bereaved in conditions other than 'peacetime'. As in the preceding section, 'conflict' is surprisingly difficult to define meaningfully and inclusively and is often best discussed in relation to concrete case studies. For general clarity, however, we may say that the contexts of interest require human agency (excluding, therefore, natural disasters and technological accidents), a high degree of

co-operative organisation (excluding, therefore, lone shooting 'sprees'), and mass near-simultaneous fatalities involving battle and/or massacre. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) usefully distinguishes between 'state-based conflict' (inter- and intra-state armed conflict where the government is a combatant), 'non-state conflict' (between organised militia groups such as Islamic State and Kurdish irregular forces in Syria) and 'one-sided violence' (civilian massacres committed by state or non-state groups), conservatively estimating 125,000 fatalities across such 40 such conflicts in 2014 (Melander 2015). We are certainly interested in these phenomena, but, as a matter of emphasis, are particularly interested in the intentional (as opposed to collateral) killing of unarmed civilians – captured partially but not wholly by the UCDP's 'one-sided violence' category - and that entail commission of the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. This is not to say that the families of either armed combatants or civilians unintentionally caught in crossfire are not worthy of consideration or devastated by their losses (they are), but rather that our focus is on the most vulnerable, intentionally-targeted populations without access to protection or compensation. In sum then, we discuss here the experiences of families bereaved as a product of 'organised mass violence' in this special, if convoluted, sense.

The next task is to convey something of the quantitative and qualitative differences of bereavement in these contexts while making clear (i) the absolute validity of 'peacetime' experiences and (ii) the assumption that the psychological process underlying them are likely identical regardless of context by virtue of common humanity. Reliable and valid data are notoriously difficult to obtain in active conflicts, however, one pre-eminent dataset may be used by way of illustration: the Atrocities Documentation Survey carried out in 2004 by a US State Department funded team with a representative sample of 1136 Darfurian refugees (see Hagan et al 2005; Hagan and Rymond-Richmond 2009; Kaiser and Hagan 2015). The

refugees were then resident in camps in Chad, and had fled attacks by both Sudanese government and Janjaweed militia pursuing a racialized eliminationist ideology. Based on this data in combination with a separate WHO mortality survey of the same camps, Hagan and colleagues (2005) estimated nearly 400,000 deaths in the period 2003-2005, nearly 143,000 of these due to lethal violence; the remainder to disease and malnutrition. Underlining the frequently gendered nature of mass violence, 60.6% of respondents reported at least one male family member killed and 15.5% reported a female member killed. Despite severe social cultural stigma relating to the disclosure of sexual violence, 7.6% of respondents reported that a family member had been raped, and 65.9% reported at least one family member had been killed or raped. Dehumanising racist epithets were overheard by 37% of respondents where the content expressed the intention to use rape as a genocidal tool – "we will kill all the men and rape the women. We want to change the colour" (Hagan et al 2005, p.526). In separate analyses of the same data (US Department of State 2004), 80% of respondents stated they had had their livestock stolen, and 81% their village destroyed. These horrifying statistics make clear not only the huge scale of family bereavement in this kind of 'asymmetric' violence but that it often forms part of a wider constellation of systematic and intentional sexual violence, property appropriation, and destruction. Though, for reasons of ethical sensitivity and data quality, respondents were not asked about their personal victimisation, it is evident by their testimony and general situation as refugees that they were also primary victims.

If these statistics give a sense of the scale of collectively imposed and collectively experienced trauma attendant on mass murder, there is one further form of mass violence that can be said to create its own particular family trauma dynamics: the abduction, murder and *clandestine* disposal of relatives. As a strategy of aggression, this can be traced at least to Hitler's 1941 'Night and Fog' decree that used these methods to suppress resistance in

occupied western Europe, and in doing so, not only eradicated the abductee but among those connected to him/her, also sowed terror and fundamental uncertainty regarding their whereabouts and vital status (USHMM 2015). Patrice McSherry (2005) analyses the development of this strategy post-war, and its consolidation as a key tool for the repression of Marxist political groupings in Latin America during the 1970s and 1980s. As we shall see, the state of not knowing, fearing the worst, but not daring to relinquish hope or give oneself permission to grieve has been shown to be particularly debilitating for surviving family members.

Bereavement in these contexts has well-described and perhaps unsurprisingly severe effects on the mental health of survivors, with particularly high levels of psychiatric disorder such as major depressive disorder (MDD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and complicated grief (CG) observed (Kristensen et al 2012). As an illustration, of 60 war-bereaved Kosovar civilians who had lost a first degree relative, 38% met the criteria for CG and 55% for PTSD a full seven years after the death event (Morina et al 2010). The prolongation of grieving attendant on having a 'missing' relative has also been shown to elevate measures of traumatic grief and major depression relative to those with confirmed bereavements, 15 years or more after the trigger events (Barakovic et al 2013; Powell et al 2010).

In sum, human psychology dictates that while inward grief is likely to be experienced similarly - albeit with significant cultural loading regarding its outward expression - mass violence associated with the commission of international crimes has a greater capacity to overwhelm as the cumulative stress of primary victimisation, multiple traumatic bereavement and potential loss of an entire way of life takes its toll. How then, can families thus affected possibly organise themselves to exert effects in peri- and post-conflict society?

Studying organised mass violence: The 'Corpses of Mass Violence and Genocide Programme'

The case studies described in the following sections begin to answer these questions and formed part of a four-year European Research Council funded programme 'Corpses of Mass Violence and Genocide'[vi]. The programme's aim was to examine through a multidisciplinary lens, the ways in which diverse societies do and do not come to terms with a legacy of mass violence through their relationship with the dead. Combining historical, anthropological, criminological and socio-legal insights, the programme developed methods centred around 'brief team ethnography': immersive and intensive (1-2 week) field visits prefigured by extensive literature review and access negotiations; and where fieldwork consisted of semi-structured professional interviews with a wide range of actors (for example, forensic archaeologists, state prosecutors, psychologists, artists, and funeral directors), commemorative and archival site visits, opportunistic encounters, and cultural and academic events. A variety of data – field notes, photographs, court documents, secondary datasets, and more – were collected, pooled and analysed both collectively though team de-briefs and through individual thematic analysis. Emerging findings were also informed by secondary analysis of existing documentary sources and by reciprocal longitudinal engagement with the networks of fieldwork participants who later participated in annual academic workshops in the UK, France and Switzerland. Field work was conducted in contexts designed to provide variation in time, place and form of mass violence: Argentina and Uruguay (2012), Belarus (2013), Bosnia (2013 and 2015), Rwanda (2014), Spain (2014), Latvia (2014) and Poland (2015).

Family activism proved to be a strong emergent theme from the programme as a whole. In Argentina, the sub-themes emerging from professional interviews were triangulated with family survivor data from fieldwork and from examples in the literature and media, and

focus here on survivor narratives. In Bosnia, we focus in on insights gained from professional interviews and related literatures.

Argentina: contested family responses to 'disappearance'.

As McSherry (2005) has analysed in detail, the 'national reorganisation process' instigated in the 1976 coup by the heads of the Argentinian army, navy and air force, had its origins in 'Plan Condor', a Cold War era, US-backed strategy to co-ordinate the repression and eradication of anti-Marxist political opposition in Latin America. The strategy involved the division of the country into operational zones in which plain-clothed paramilitary squads in unmarked cars pursued 'wanted' leftists, abducted them from streets and homes, and transferred them to a network of clandestine detention centres (CDCs) where they were interrogated, tortured, and killed. Bodies were disposed of in illegal burials and cremations, and dumped in so-called 'death flights' over the Rio de la Plata (CONADEP 1986, pp 209-233). This process came to be known as 'disappearance', and its victims the 'disappeared' ('desaparacidos'). Junta leaders denied it absolutely, and the use of paramilitary actors enabled the authorities to respond to both informal and formal (*habeus corpus*) requests for information with feigned ignorance and a veneer of legitimacy. Disappearance was most intense during the 'hot' period 1976-78, and after the Junta's self-dissolution in the wake of the Falklands/Malvinas defeat, the subsequent 1984 truth commission ('CONADEP') established just under 9,000 missing for the entire period.

Families of the disappeared were affected in obvious and less obvious ways. The CONADEP report – 'Nunca Mas' ('Never Again') details that during the 'hot' period, family members were used as hostages in order to secure surrender of 'suspects', were co-detained and tortured, and indeed, entire families were themselves disappeared (CONADEP 1986, pp. 321-328). For those who were not also primary victims, the paradigmatic ontological

predicament became centred around *not knowing*: dread at the thought of what might be happening to loved ones, but a wall of official silence and denial in response to repeated requests for information

Most of the missing were in their twenties and thirties and, to a great extent due to the 'traditional' maternal role in this conservative Catholic society, mothers tended to be the family members most active in searching for information (Guzman-Bouvard 1994). In this way, women in identical predicaments - waiting in police stations – met and began to self-organise in order to highlight their common plight and to demand information. In April 1977, and borrowing from the civil and human rights tradition of the public demonstration, the first march around the main government square of Buenos Aires was held, and over the course of the year, evolved into an iconic weekly ritual of the 'Madres of the Plaza Mayo' involving linked-hands procession, slogan-chanting and the presentation of photographs of the disappeared. Madres wore the white 'panuelo' (headscarf), designed to resemble a child's diaper on which the missing person's name was written. In this way, members of the movement symbolically underlined their core identity, not as victims or survivors, but primarily as *mothers*. This, of course, was literally true but by emphasising the strongest of familial bonds and responsibilities, the women conveyed their sense of visceral upset while avoiding an overtly ideological stance that might have threatened their own safety[vii].

During the Junta period, the slogan 'return them alive' ('aparicion con vida') pithily described the movement's core demand while articulating the innermost fear that they were *not* alive, however, this phrase took on new significance after the fall of the dictatorship. Limited prosecutions and the CONADEP commission were set up in the immediate aftermath, but it quickly became clear that a pact of silence obtained and that no further information on the disappeared would be released. The reaction of the Madres is captured well by Guzman Bouvard (1994, p.138) "Initially, many of the women believed that their

children might actually be living… As a matter of policy, though, the Mothers refused to consider their offspring dead because they viewed this acceptance as a way of burying the past and, more important, giving up the pursuit of justice". Practically speaking, this entailed a continuation of established protest tactics, and a complete boycott of the CONADEP[viii], preliminary investigations and exhumations. The strain of this uncompromising position began to tell, however, and the organisation split in 1986. In doing so, the two resulting organisations offered a collective metaphor for the processing of traumatic bereavement.

The original group retained its name and continued to pursue an agenda of resolute *denial* of their children's death. Through the successive periods of selective prosecution and amnesty (the Alfonsin regime of the 1980s), of pardon and impunity (Menem in the 1990s), and of more meaningful mass prosecution for crimes against humanity (the Kirchner regimes of the 2000s), the Madres have maintained their initial positions but been transformed into an overtly political movement that keep their children alive in memory, most particularly through the pursuit of their radical ideals. Pursuing the metaphor of the mother, they have described their missing children as 'giving birth to them' as activists, and in supporting the anti-establishment politics of the next generation, describe themselves as 'permanently pregnant' (Guzman-Bouvard 1994, p15).

The group 'Mothers of Plaza Mayo – Founding Line', however, adopted a more *acknowledgement* based mode of activity, accepting the realpolitik of the post-Junta settlement, and attempting to find their own methods of locating, identifying and burying the remains of their children. Among other things, this led to investment in and co-operation with the developing science of human forensic anthropology as applied to human rights investigations, an entirely new field pioneered in Argentina by the US scholar Clyde Snow. Snow established basic exhumation protocols and procedures and built local capacity by founding the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF). Founding Line have also been

instrumental in founding DNA databanks required to identify remains accurately (Moon 2013).

Family activism in Argentina stretches beyond the single generation link, however. A sub-group of the Madres had had their pregnant daughters disappeared or infant grandchildren abducted along with their parents and had therefore named themselves the 'Grandmothers ('Abuelas') of the Plaza Mayo'. Echoing strategies used by Nazi Germany in occupied Europe and in Francoist Spain, children were given to ideologically 'pure' pro-Junta families to raise as their own. The Abuelas, in general, allied with the Founding Line position, and were again, instrumental in developing dedicated forensic science in the country. As the decades wore on and the abducted children themselves gained maturity, a self-organised group known as H.I.J.O.S[ix] also formed in connection with and support of the Abuelas. 'Hijo/as[x]' were either eventually told of their family origins by their appropriating families, or through their own suspicions, had this confirmed by submitting themselves to DNA analysis.

Of particular interest here, are the public narratives of both Abuelas and Hijo/as. There has, in criminology as well as many other disciplines, been a 'narrative turn' (Brown 1994; Presser 2015) in research over the last few decades as interest has grown in subjective identity-related discourses of continuity and change, and their implications for (criminal) action. One of the best known of these is Maruna's (2001) distinction of 'redemption' and 'condemnation' scripts in relation to desistance from crime. While the relative positionality of Maruna's 'peacetime' perpetrators and the family survivors of lethal mass violence is both obvious and clear, analysis of the narratives of the latter (here, Abuelas and Hijo/as) suggests cognate 'identity work' is performed through reflective speech in what will be characterised as 'family survivor scripts'. Here, however, reflections do not relate to one's own immoral behaviour, but to the losses attendant on the lethal and secretive behaviour of state

perpetrators. The core identities in question obviously differ – for the Abuelas, the nested identities of 'mother', 'activist' and 'grandmother', and for the Hijo/as, 'son/daughter' and 'grandson/grandaughter' – but both sets of scripts describe the longitudinal identity dynamics inherent in the breaking and making of affective family ties. There seem to be three forms of script.

The first might be termed a 'quest/yearning' script which might be seen as the default activist position produced in everyday discourse by Abuelas who continue to search for their grandchildren. The predicament of not knowing gains poignancy as other cases are successfully identified: 'It is exhausting because every time the Grandmothers find a child, I think it could be her [own grandchild]. So I'm suffering so much inside for my loss but at the same time I hold so much hope [of finding her]" (Stockwell 2014 p.51). Here, grief is unresolved: the mother-child bond is broken, and while there is the awareness of the possibility of a new bond, it has not yet materialised and may not materialise. There is continuity only with the initial rupture of maternal identity and relationship. The sororal bonds of the Abuelas themselves seem energising, however, with their collective successes experienced as sustaining for both activist identity and personal hope.

The second script might be termed a 'redemption/resolution' script, which, perhaps because of its narrative completeness, tends to be the best publicised. This develops the 'quest' script to encompass the excitement and trepidation of DNA analysis, concludes with an emotionally demanding but joyful (re-)union, and portrays a re-making of identity where separate and separated histories are weaved into a narrative whole with a past, present and future. The paradigmatic example of this narrative is the celebrated dyad of the (Hijo/a) Ignacio Hurban and (Abuela) Estela Barnes de Carlotto, a founding member and president of the Abuelas organisation. The following selective quotes illustrate the general arc of de Carlotto's public redemption narrative: 'When I turned 80, I begged God not to let me die

before I found my grandson…I didn't want to die without hugging him…all the love I'd kept for him came over me, to tell him how much I loved him, how much I'd looked for him…the only thought I had was: Laura can rest in peace now. I felt Laura said to me: '*mother, mission accomplished*' (The Guardian 2015, italics added). Likewise, her kidnapped and reunited grandchild, Ignacio Hurban, produces a sympathetic narrative: " '…there was always this background noise. I didn't look like my parents…I was home…when I got the call. I was Estela de Carlotto's grandson!... Meeting my two grandmothers was the most moving thing because it was like 'Bam!' there it is – *we won, we did it*, we're here, seeing each other, talking…It has been a beautiful experience. I've met so many relatives. It's a big family'(The Guardian, *ibid*). Such scripts describe a *continuity* of relationships with significant figures of the past (the murdered daughter/mother; Igancio's adoptive parents), significant identity *rupture* for the grandchild[xi], but a rewarding and redemptive availability of *new and positive* family identities that also have a wider social significance. There is a sense of 'triumph through adversity', of collectively actualised but dyadically-focussed social justice, and of a 'quest' completed.

A third script might be termed the 'rejection' script and centres on the *adverse* reaction of the grandchild to the news of their possible or actual status as an abducted Hijo/a, together with the ramifications for the seeking Abuela. Here the identity rupture for the Hijo/a is found to be unassimilable and profoundly disruptive of an existing positive family relationship, albeit one rooted ultimately in deceit and serious crime. Our meeting with an Abuela at their Buenos Aires headquarters described initially a common 'quest' script of bereavement, activist protest, and the long, supported struggle for information. It then proceeded to incorporate features of the 'redemption script', specifically, the anticipatory excitement of establishing a potential 'match' for her grandchild. This woman's script then diverted to describe the identified young adult's resistance to submit to DNA procedures, the

eventual establishment of a positive match, but the continued resistance of the grandchild to establishing a relationship with her biological grandmother. At the time of interview, contact had been made and maintained between the parties but was described as 'difficult' and with 'much work to do'. This script promises resolution but ultimately offers only successive emotional barriers and either a fragile, strained and distant relationship, or no relationship at all. Such cases arguably not only perpetuate existing identity ruptures and psychological conflict (on the part of the Abuela) but also create further sets of problems (on the part of the grandchild and their adoptive families) without the short-term possibility of resolution. They strike a melancholy, bittersweet narrative chord and have provoked wider debates on the right of the alleged or actual grandchild *not* to know their identity (Peluffo 2007).

In sum, the Argentinian case illustrates, among other things, how long and psychologically complex a shadow is cast by lethal mass violence, not only on its direct victims, but also on the families who cope with its varied effects. One set of organised family responses has evolved spontaneously out of the needs of women culturally configured to best represent the interests of the 'missing'. As will be developed further in the next section , family activism has had not only national but also global effects by offering both a portable model of initially 'apolitical' political activism, and a social catalyst for the science of forensic anthropology. But in the context of ongoing post-conflict societal rancour, it is clear these gains have been achieved at considerable cost to activist members. Collective action provides support and purpose for its members but is physically and psychologically demanding, has consequential effects on wider family life, and, for the individual, the ultimate goals of truth, justice or reconciliation may be thwarted by the natural death of the ageing activist, or, as with the case of the Abuelas and Hijo/as, be rejected and denied either partially or totally. The 'family survivor' scripts of these latter parties capture something of the individual possibilities for longer-term meaning- and identity-making in relation to

destroyed family bonds. More broadly, the collective positions of the differing groups of mothers and grandmothers illustrate contrasting modes of brokering relationships between the dead and the living; a major point to which we will return.

Bosnia: individual, collective and societal contexts of bereaved family activism.

The complex inter-ethnic, inter- and intra-state Bosnian War (1992-1995) claimed over 100,000 lives, and produced 31500 missing persons - the majority of whom were Bosnian Muslims ('Bosniaks') -and led to the displacement of 2.2 million people, that is, over half of the pre-war population (ICMP 2014). The war was infamously characterised by epic sieges, the establishment of concentration camps, widespread forced population transfer ('ethnic cleansing'), mass rape, and numerous massacres of men and boys. One such set of massacres centred on the predominantly Bosniak town of Srebrenica in an enclave on the eastern border with Serbia. After becoming a major regional refugee destination and several years of siege, Bosnian Serb and irregular Serbian forces occupied the town in mid-July 1995, forcing Muslim women, children and elderly to flee to the local UN base at Potocari, and a column of 15000 men and boys to attempt to trek though forest to reach the Bosniak-held town of Tuzla, 100km to the north. After capitulation by Dutch 'peacekeepers' and a failure of UN high command to call in air strikes, Serb forces captured the base and among serious violence, separated men from women. Over the next week, as a result of this action and ongoing harassment of the Tuzla-bound column, some 8000 men and boys were shot dead and deposited in mass graves. In the weeks and months that followed, Serb forces returned to further conceal their crimes by excavating and reburying the remains in a series of secondary and even tertiary graves scattered about the region

      The war staggered to a negotiated conclusion that created a dual-entity state where boundaries reinforced the violence of population transfer and left Srebrenica in the new entity

of Republika Srpska (RS). The surviving family members of the then 'missing' ('nestali' in Bosnian) found themselves expelled from their homes and in insanitary refugee camps in the non-Serb entity ('the Federation') at Tuzla and elsewhere. From this desperate situation, and as documented by the remarkable ethnographic work of Sarah Wagner (2008), Selma Leydesdorff (2011) and Elissa Helms (2013) women began to self-organise and begin the process of searching for their male relatives. As noted by Wagner (2008), the first collective action as the 'Women of Srebrenica' ('Zene Srebrenica', hereafter, 'the Women') after the war was to begin a Madres-style march every 11th day of the month in Tuzla, with name-embroidered pillowcases substituting for panuelos. The Women opened offices in Tuzla and Sarajevo where the organisation's strategy could be planned, potential donors received, and bereaved women given support. Over the following years, these and other groups exerted strong civil society effects several interlinked ways.

First, the Women provided important impetus to the developing international criminal justice response. John Hagan, in his work charting the contested early operational history of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), describes a transformative meeting between incoming ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carlo Del Ponte and the Women which helped to clarify the extent and nature of their losses and is attributed as giving motive force to the leadership of the prosecution (Hagan 2004, p.219). Hagan also (p.167) describes the emotive direct address of a bereaved mother to General Krstic[1] during the course of his trial which is portrayed as a key moment not only for the substance of the testimony provided, but for its apparently strong emotional effect on the accused.

Second, in their role as advocates for bereaved families, the Women, in league with cognate women's associations, influenced the shaping of Bosnia-Herzegovina's 2004 Law on Missing Persons (ICMP 2014), the first of its kind. This guaranteed (Article 3) the family's

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[1] later convicted for genocide

'right to know' about their disappeared relative(s), established the framework for providing state welfare and burial support (Articles 11 to 18) and prioritised assistance to family associations (Article 19).

Third, the Women shaped the technical and social processes of identification of the dead. In the immediate aftermath of the war, there were a number of ad hoc attempts to begin systematic searches, exhumations and identifications with contributions from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), Clyde Snow and EAAF members. Separate entity-level bodies were created to oversee the process and using traditional 'presumptive' techniques of identification via recovered clothing, personal possessions and dental/medical records, modest numbers of the Srebrenica dead were identified (ICMP 2014). It was not until the International Commission for Missing Persons (ICMP) was created in 1996, however, that the process began to change fundamentally. Set up as an international NGO by US President resident Bill Clinton, the organisation's stated purpose was to assist in the investigation and recovery of the missing which it did in two chief ways. First, it engaged bereaved family organisations like the Women via its Civil Society Initiative, organising and providing fora for discussion on key matters and also direct funding in the form of small grants. By building capacity in this way, the organisation supported family organisations to participate in the process of drawing up the Law on Missing Persons. Second, it also co-opted families into the development of a radically different approach to identification of the dead. 'Presumptive' methods had seemingly achieved good results in the early days of exhumations, however, a persistent set of concerns were aired over the accuracy of identification, highlighting the frequency with which mobile refugees exchanged clothes and identification papers, together with the further problems of disarticulated remains spread across several grave sites. This raised the prospect of false identifications and the disruption of any apparent resolution achieved by the family;

arguably a further form of victimisation. To overcome this, it was proposed to focus on the fast-developing science of DNA sequencing-and-analysis capable of very high (>99%) accuracy when reference samples from human remains are cross-matched to archived samples from relatives. The Women assisted this process in two ways: first, by placing pressure on ICMP and its founders to establish technical facilities in Bosnia (ICMP 2014), and second, by establishing, promoting and participating in a substantial DNA-gathering exercise and resulting databank of reference samples. By combining these two innovations, families and their institutional supporters created a domestic 'industry' at the forefront of the science and with the highest material throughput of its type in the world. In the aftermath of Srebrenica, to date over 24000 skeletal samples have been processed from over 40 primary and secondary graves, representing nearly 7000 positive identifications (ICMP 2014 p.97).

The further significance of these processes can be seen in the unique rituals of return and reburial developed by family associations, and which we observed in full. Since 2003, the several hundreds of remains identified that calendar year are transferred from their Tuzla repository to the Visoko mortuary centre north-west of Sarajevo. Here, they are placed with care and respect into individually identified coffins and loaded onto convoy vehicles bedecked with the Bosnian flag. The vehicles proceed from Visoko via Sarajevo, where the convoy vehicle is festooned with flowers, to the distinctive cemetery at Potocari outside Srebrenica. This site, acquired by the Office of the High Representative (OHR) is itself a product of the lobbying of bereaved families wishing to stress communal suffering at a symbolic site now deep within ethnically cleansed territory (Leydesdorff 2011, p193). The convoy arrives on the eve of the main rituals and the coffins are unloaded and stored in buildings on the former UN base. Here, private communal prayers are held. On the morning of July 12th, the coffins are deposited in the main cemetery ritual area across the road from the base and relatives take their places next to excavated graves. The site is a highly social

space, not solely because of the tens of thousands of people present, but also because families, friends and former neighbours take the opportunity to 'visit' each other and to pay their graveside respects. The restrained by tangibly warm reunions clearly function to renew and maintain frayed social bonds. After political speeches, and brief communal prayers that end in a profound collective silence, the coffins are interred by family members accompanied by prayers. The crowds then dissipate to begin the long journey away from their former homeland.

Across these four sets of activities, we see then, how and to what extent bereaved family organisations led by women have radically shaped post-conflict efforts at society building in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Much like the Argentinian case, this has and continues to be a contested and difficult process characterised by disagreement, rancour and the limitations of the post-war political and economic settlement. The official acknowledgement and status afforded to families of the missing, along with the unprecedented levels of identification and reburial of murdered relatives testifies, however, to the undeniable progress made in this context. Our final comparative observations can now be made.

Discussion and conclusion

This chapter has made a case for extending the victimological gaze to the family survivors of lethal violence, not just in peacetime, but in contexts characterised by organised mass violence. We have argued that sudden, unexpected bereavement borne of dehumanising and eliminationist ideology can exert widespread and enduring effects on mental and physical health, particularly when it is combined with primary victimisation and, in the case of major international crimes, the destruction of property, community and a way of life. We have also argued that particular forms of clandestine killing and bodily disposal can impose additional burdens on surviving family members as, in the face of official denials, they cope long-term

with the absence of information or a body to begin the process of grieving. These arguments have been illustrated in relation to case studies of major systemic conflict in Argentina and Bosnia and we have also shown how often multiply-bereaved family members exhibit Rock's (1998) 'imperative to organise' by forming activist associations that achieve clear, if hard-won, gains both during and after the cessation of overt conflict. A number of concluding comparative points can be made.

First, in the spirt of critical victimology, the case studies problematise the clear definition of primary and secondary victims: very often, family members are both and struggle to free themselves from the chronic effects of both forms of victimisation decades after the source events. Family survivors of mass violence, like their peacetime equivalents, may gain a form of purpose and personal sense of 'mission' through activism but there is no guarantee that they will achieve the sorts of 'redemption/resolution' scripts typified in the Hurban/de Carlotto case. In fact, absent the possibility of new family bonds, it is questionable whether this form of script can be formed when 'resolution' might mean the confirmation of a death and the return of partial human remains. Indeed, in the example of the Srebrenica massacres, even burial of identified remains may not represent the end of the trauma journey: new identifications of body parts scattered across secondary graves, together with the ongoing resolution of early mis-identifications are increasingly leading to *re*-exhumations for the purposes of skeletal reassociations, together with further family disruption. This example makes clear how fragile the psychological gains of apparently successful family activism can be, and further illustrates how the 'disappeared' corpse can radically extend in space and time, the trauma associated with violent bereavement (Shute 2015).

A related point can be made regarding the complex and unpredictable interactions of individual (micro), collective (meso) and societal (macro) variables that constrain the kinds of 'successes' achieved by family organisations at particular points in their history. Scraton's

(1998, 2013) study of the Hillsborough Family Support Group shows how members had to endure organisational splits and three decades of macro-level marginalisation and vilification before changes in political and media sensibilities enabled personal and collective vindication. In an analogous way, the energy of individual family survivors during the Argentinian Junta was initially harnessed by the formation of the Madres, however, the interaction of personal and collective values and those of successive political regimes forced organisational splits, divergent aims, and impacts that were felt differentially across the following decades. By contrast, the more wholesale destruction and reshaping of Bosnian society promoted a well-funded international effort to create political institutions (for example, the OHR) and NGOs (for example, the ICMP) that were capable of empowering family associations on an unprecedented scale and timescale. That family bereavement in Bosnia might have been *prevented* by sustained international military and diplomatic action on a comparable scale is an irony not lost on families and wider society. Clearly, a mature appreciation of the possibilities of family activism requires a multi-level and diachronic set of perspectives.

A third comparative point can be made in relation to the role of gender in the nature, functioning and achievements of family associations in these examples. Helms (2013) notes that by portraying themselves primarily as mothers and wives, female activists in Bosnia have used 'positive [gender] essentialisms' to create an effective space for public engagement traditionally denied to women. Paradoxically, however, those same essentialisms have also prevented them from being taken seriously in the more substantive arena of male-dominated parliamentary politics, and limit the possibilities for longer-term gender equality. Similar observations might be made with regard to the at least initially 'apolitical' nature of the Madres' protests and claims, and although the political position of women may be relatively advanced in comparison to Bosnia, authors (for example, Peluffo 2007) continue to link the

broader acceptability of the continuing movements to their relative degree of publicly expressed femininity.

Finally, in processes that have their origin in Argentina but have reached their contemporary apogee in Bosnia, a co-developed alliance of bereaved family activism and forensic anthropological/archaeological science has formed a movement that, alongside human rights and international criminal justice movements, offer increasingly substantive and globalised counterflows to the long-globalised networks of arms, military training and trade that continue to fuel organised mass violence.

The victimological implications of this observation are that these processes are deserving of much greater disciplinary acknowledgement and study. To do so, victimology must remain critical but also become more creative and ambitious in its research aims; it must also, ideally, become more interdisciplinary and more conceptually complex in order to capture the subtleties of responses to mass victimisation. This is undoubtedly a very significant set of challenges but one that an outward looking and reflexive critical victimology can be equipped to take forward.

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[i] for definitions and methods see

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/status_report/2014/methodology/en/

[ii] largely, inter- and intra-state armed conflict; for definitions and methods see

http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/

[iii] multi-dimensional approaches to operationalising 'peace' exist, see for example Institute for Economics and Peace (2015) 'positive peace index' but are beyond the scope of this chapter.

[iv] differences in the definition of lethal violence occur across jurisdiction and are a source of confound in comparisons

[v] see www.samm.org.uk

[vi] see http://www.corpsesofmassviolence.eu/

[vii] as it happens, the women were not safe; were arrested, beaten, harassed and early members themselves 'disappeared' (Guzman-Bouvard 1994).

[viii] indeed, the estimated figure of the disappeared was strongly contested, and is still claimed by the Madres to be in the order of 30,000.

[ix] An acronym, translating as 'Sons and Daughters for Identity and Justice Against Oblivion and Silence'.

[x] 'hijo' is the masculine form of 'child', with 'hija' the female equivalent. Forthwith, the gender neutral designation 'Hijo/a' is used.

[xi] Ignacio Hurban recently changed his name to Ignacio Guido Montoya de Carlotto, reflecting his intended birth name and biological family names