Queering Citizenship: LGBT+ activism and resistance against oppressive police powers in democratic Argentina.

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Part 1: Research

Research Introduction

Argentina is often considered a progressive pioneer in LGBT+ rights, globally ranking among top nations in terms of both legal and social equality[1]. It boasts being the first Latin-American nation to legalise same-sex marriage in 2010, and the tenth country world-wide. Therein lies the risk of these achievements being understood as something merely done by policymakers, however, behind this image there lies a rich history of LGBT+ activism born of unjust legal mechanisms, discriminatory police culture, and repression, which often goes unseen and underappreciated.

Police powers

Police powers formed a large part of this repression, particularly the legal instrument known as police edicts. The edict system existed in some capacity across various provinces, but this

[1] Equaldex, 'LGBT Rights in Argentina', https://www.equaldex.com/

report will centre around their application in the Buenos Aires due to the city's size and LGBT+ population. Edicts granted police the power to detain and arrest individuals on a discretionary basis[2], and it was based upon a discriminatory black letter law which would disproportionately target LGBT+ individuals[3]. The first norm associated with police edicts in Argentina date back to the 18th century[4], and their legislation continued to develop throughout the decades, with their application becoming particularly severe during the oppressive military-dictatorship from 1976-1983 as a form of social control. Driven by repressive law and prejudiced culture, the use of edicts persisted largely unchanged following Argentina's transition to democracy in 1983.

The edict against public scandal was notoriously used to detain LGBT+ individuals, with Articles 2°F and 2°H particularly targeting gay men, the trans community, and sex workers.

- **Article 2°F:** those who appeared in public thoroughfares or public places dressed or costumed in the clothing of the opposite sex.
- **Article 2°H:** persons of either sex who publicly solicit or offer themselves for a carnal act.

This discrimination created a vicious cycle of violence and societal rejection; Article 2°F marginalised, travestis[5], and paired with a contemptuous culture against them this meant that becoming a sex worker was often their only option for earning an income. But Article 2°H prohibited this sex work, and so LGBT+ individuals were only further shunned and punished.

Furthermore, the edict system was under-documented and therefore highly inaccessible to the general public, meaning that affected individuals often lacked the ability to understand their legal rights and protections. It was only through activist groups coming together to provide advice and expose the internal processing system that some clarity was provided.

<u>Protest</u>

The 1980s and 1990s saw a massive shift towards LGBT+ representation and protest. Through public gatherings, magazines, campaigns, and activist groups, their voices began being heard. Employing a wide variety of protest strategies, the LGBT+ community vehemently opposed the existence of police edicts and their use, and they campaigned for their reform. Lesbians, gay men, transsexuals, travestis, came together during this period and fought, though not without internal conflict, pushing for legal citizenship that a large portion of society did not wish to grant them, and becoming an important part of the foundation that Argentina's positive legal and social attitudes towards LGBT+ communities lies upon today.

The epicentre of this change was largely concentrated in Buenos Aires City, the capital of Argentina and the core of the country's LGBT+ culture in the late 20th century. The city gained regional autonomy in 1994, which, in combination with persistent protest, would catalyse the eventual repeal and replacement of police edicts in 1998.

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[2] R A Gentili, *Me van a tener que acompañar: una visión crítica sobre los edictos policiales* (El Naranjo 1995) 27.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid, 13.

[5] Travesti: a Spanish term for a distinct feminine gender identity primarily used in Latin America by people, usually assigned male at birth, who present femininely but do not seek genital gender-affirmation surgery. Not to be confused with the English translation 'transvestite'.

Aims

This research aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the relationship between police powers and LGBT+ activism in Buenos Aires City following Argentina's transition to democracy in the 1980s and 1990s. It will examine the application of police edicts through case studies accessed through archives and analyse the protesting response.

A list of this research project's aims:

- Understand the legal basis of police edicts in Buenos Aires City.
- Examine evidence of the police applying these powers discriminatorily through reports of unjust arrests, raids, and violence.
- Document protesting movements through archived reports and newspapers.
- Assess protest strategies used in retaliation.
- Evaluate how police powers and LGBT+ activism shaped one another to gain a broader understanding of the relationship between the law and its subjects.

Methodology

This research is largely based on the qualitative investigation of archives outlining relevant protesting movements. It will explore newspaper clippings, photos, diaries, interviews, and magazines to piece together individual stories into a broader tapestry of injustice. Journal articles and academic commentaries, both recent and contemporary to the period being researched, also form a substantial part of this report, providing critical angles and analysis of secondary quantitative data to supply a statistical point of analysis.

Ethical considerations

Real names and images of people are used in this investigation, all sourced from public archives. I will be extracting factual, relevant content from any tabloid material originally produced for a society with a more stigmatised view on LGBT+ communities, and I will aim to abstract data and experiences into reflective, educational material. Stories of violence and injustice are retold through this research with the intention of grounding its legal argument, demonstrating peoples' experiences through real consequences to the conceptual discrimination of the law and the culture behind it. The choice of any referenced archives to withhold names is respected within this project.

Police edicts were discriminatorily used against many different groups, not exclusive to the LGBT+ community. This would include sex workers and youth counterculture movements, such as punks, goths, and rock-music fans. While this research focuses on the use of edicts against LGBT+ individuals, it addresses other affected identities through an intersectional approach.

The scale and timeframe of this project have limited the breadth of this research in some respects. This topic is expansive, with sensitive material that necessitates a wider understanding of the context surrounding it. Therefore, the research is currently focused only on the City of Buenos Aires, which leaves a large portion of the country unaccounted for. It is worth noting this, as despite my earlier claim of Buenos Aires being the epicentre of LGBT+ activism, there was still a significant impact from other provinces, all of which merit their own investigation which unfortunately this project could not fit within its designated scope.

Furthermore, many of the accessed materials that have contributed to this project are in Spanish. I am not a native Spanish-speaker and have only learnt the language through school and university. I have worked hard to try to capture the essence of every source, but I must address that there is some nuance that my linguistic capability may limit or not properly convey in translating this information.

Results/Findings

This section of the report will be split into two main dimensions:

1. Police edicts in practice;
2. Protest in response.

Both sections will select a few relevant case studies, analysing and interpreting archival evidence attached to each case.

1: Police Edicts in Practice

Police employed edicts in a discriminatory manner towards LGBT+ individuals through a few different manners. This section of the report will mainly discuss the following:

- Raids,
- Arrests,
- Violence and physical abuse.

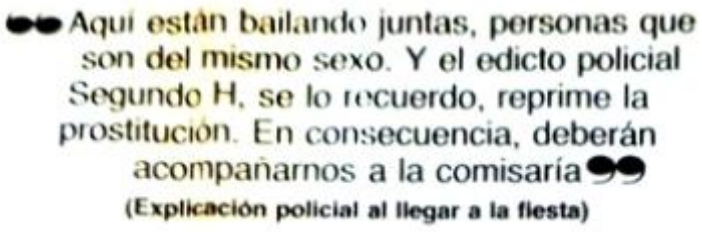


El preciso instante de la requisa policial. Finalmente, los servidores del orden detuvieron a más de 50 gays.

A section from 'Libre' magazine:
"The precise moment of the police raid. In the end, the officers detained more than 50 gay men."[6]

[6] "Estuvimos en la primera fila de una fiesta gay" (Revista Libre, 1 January 1984), Fondo Marcelo Ferreyra, CeDInCI, https://sexoyrevolucion.cedinci.org/s/la-comunidad-del-archivo/item/9664

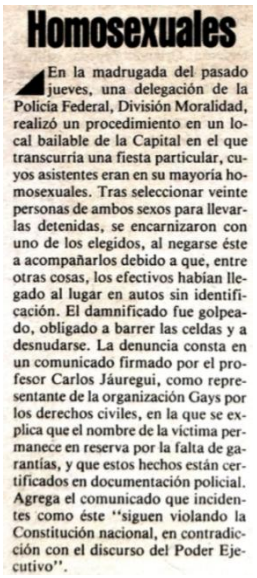
In January 1984, more than 500 people gathered for what 'Libre' magazine described as 'the so-called first public gay party.' The magazine describes a jolly, liberating atmosphere of singing and dancing. However, just a few hours into the party, police officers suddenly interrupted and began searching every corner of the house. They requested the documentation of more than one-hundred people and ended up detaining more than 50 gay men.


"Aquí están bailando juntas, personas que son del mismo sexo. Y el edicto policial Segundo H, se lo recuerdo, reprime la prostitución. En consecuencia, deberán acompañarnos a la comisaría"

(Explicación policial al llegar a la fiesta)

Another section from 'Libre' magazine quoting a police officer upon arriving to the party:
"Here people of the same sex are dancing together. Police edict 2H, let me remind you, prohibits prostitution. Consequently, they will have to accompany us to the police station."

As the above image demonstrates, they were detained under edict 2H, the clause prohibiting prostitution. A direct quote from a police officer shamelessly conflates men dancing together with 'public prostitution', showing how the reason for their detention was often driven by personal prejudices from the police themselves rather than following the concrete letter of the law.


Homosexuales

En la madrugada del pasado jueves, una delegación de la Policía Federal, División Moralidad, realizó un procedimiento en un local bailable de la Capital en el que transcurría una fiesta particular, cuyos asistentes eran en su mayoría homosexuales. Tras seleccionar veinte personas de ambos sexos para llevarlas detenidas, se encarnizaron con uno de los elegidos, al negarse éste a acompañarlos debido a que, entre otras cosas, los efectivos habían llegado al lugar en autos sin identificación. El damnificado fue golpeado, obligado a barrer las celdas y a desnudarse. La denuncia consta en un comunicado firmado por el profesor Carlos Jáuregui, como representante de la organización Gays por los derechos civiles, en la que se explica que el nombre de la víctima permanece en reserva por la falta de garantías, y que estos hechos están certificados en documentación policial. Agrega el comunicado que incidentes como éste "siguen violando la Constitución nacional, en contradicción con el discurso del Poder Ejecutivo".

A clipping from a magazine article written in 1992 describing a violent arrest.[7]

This clipping describes a dance in the capital of which the majority of its participants were homosexual. Police detained 20 people, but one refused to go with them. His reasons for refusal were concerning his own safety, citing that the police showed up in unmarked vehicles, but his protest was met with violence, and he was beaten, taken with the police, forced to strip naked, and perform the labour of sweeping cells.

[7] "Homosexuales" (Página/12, 22 May 1992), Fondo Marcelo Ferreyra, CeDInCI, https://sexoyrevolucion.cedinci.org/s/la-comunidad-del-archivo/item/9768



Protesta gay

La Asociación Gays por los Derechos Civiles denunció que en la madrugada del 14, mientras se realizaba una fiesta particular, una delegación de la División Moralidad de la Policía Federal entró al lugar para luego llevarse gente detenida, que fue maltratada.

A clipping from a newspaper article describing the police's mistreatment[8]

This article shows the group Asociación Gays por los Derechos Civiles, or 'Gay Association for Civil Rights', denouncing a police raid on a party in which they detained and mistreated multiple people.

Furthermore, the book '*Me va a tener que acompañar*' written in 1995 by Gentili, a young lawyer and activist, compared the edict system with criminal law through sharing the statistics of people arrested in 1992.[9]

Federal Crimes:
- 32,000 detained
- 3500 sentenced
- 69.9% appeal rate

Contravention edicts:
- 35,350 detained
- 33,583 sentenced
- 0.93% appeal rate

This demonstrates the sheer scale of the application of police edicts, rivalling and surpassing the criminal system for arrests. Yet there was a complete lack of legal protection, apportioning no defence lawyer upon detention, and allowing closed-door confessions signed by the arresting officer to be sufficient to convict. The absence of protection for the accused only added to the issues created by the discrimination and discretion of the police, and further demonstrates edicts as an unjust legal principle.

[8] "Protesta Gay" (Clarín, 22 May 1992), Fondo Marcelo Ferreyra CeDInCI https://sexoyrevolucion.cedinci.org/s/la-comunidad-del-archivo/item/9766

[9] R A Gentili, *Me va a tener que acompañar: una visión crítica sobre los edictos policiales* (El Naranjo 1995) 38.



Nancy de Villa Martelli's funeral, carried by her travesti friends[10].

This photograph depicts the funeral of Nancy de Villa Martelli, a travesti who died escaping police detention. She was a sex worker, forced to work on the Pan-American highway to avoid being penalised under police edicts. She was escaping police detention by foot when she was struck by multiple vehicles and died. Nancy's aunt and another friend went to the police station to claim her body, but the police initially refused. After shouting, the police carelessly gave them Nancy's remains[11].

Nancy was the fifteenth travesti, all of whom were sex workers, to die on the Pan-American highway. The displacement of sex workers and the rejection of travestis from society was putting people at risk of death, but for most there was not a choice in the matter; if they wanted to earn an income they often had to become a sex worker, as no other profession would accept them.

Marcalo, a travesti, wrote in 1987: 'At 12-years-old my homosexuality was already evident. Since then, my life has become impossible. I couldn't study or work. Because of this, I engaged in prostitution, not because I wanted to.'

This meant that Articles like 2°H penalised people not for what they did, but for who they were. Societal discrimination limited travestis' options and pushed them down one path, and the law further punished them for it.

2: Protest in Response

This section of the report will discuss the retaliatory protests from LGBT+ communities in the face of the extreme discrimination and abuse discussed in Part 1. The strategic responses are broken down into the following categories:

- Alliance and collaboration

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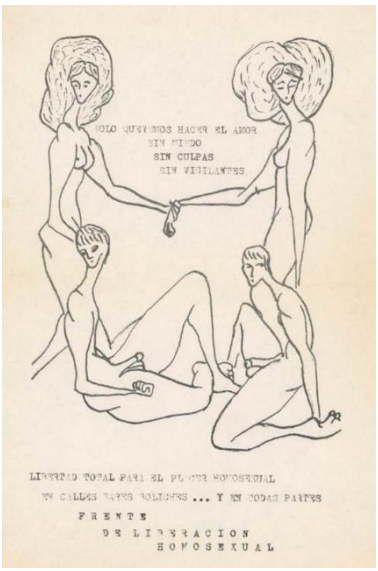
[10] Unknown photographer, "Cortejo funebre travesti," August 1987, Archivo de la Memoria Trans. Reproduced via Wikimedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cortejo_funebre_travesti.jpg

[11] Ivana Tintilay, 'Memorias de una cuarentena eterna' (*Moléculas Malucas*, 9 May 2020, updated 21 March 2023) https://www.moleculasmalucas.com/post/memorias-de-una-cuarentena-eterna

- Corporeal protest,
- Practical guidance
- Campaigns.

Alliance and collaboration



A flyer made by Frente de Liberación Homosexual: 'we just want to make love without fear, without guilt, without anyone watching'[12]

The Frente de Liberación Homosexual was formed clandestinely from the group Nuestro Mundo in 1967 and was among one of the first gay liberation activist groups in Argentina. They adopted a radical anti-capitalist view. Due to political alienation, discrimination and repression, the group dissolved in 1976.



A 1991 article by Comunidad Homosexual Argentina (CHA): 'The CHA doesn't want repression.'[13]

Comunidad Homosexual Argentina, a gay activist group, was founded in 1984 following the end of the dictatorship, with its campaign being centred around LGBT+ rights and political participation. Although there were other LGBT+ activist groups created before, the CHA is the oldest still-existing organisation in Argentina. From the group's formation one of their main demands was the repeal of police edicts.

Many other LGBT+ activist groups were formed following the dictatorship, representing all parts of the LGBT+ community. A few examples of these groups include:

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[12] Frente de Liberación Homosexual, 'Volante del Frente de Liberación Homosexual', 1970s, Fondo Marcelo Manuel Benítez, Colección Frente de Liberación Homosexual (FLH), CeDInCI, https://sexoyrevolucion.cedinci.org/s/la-comunidad-del-archivo/item/4

[13] 'La CHA no quiere represión', (Página/12, 1 June 1991), Fondo Marcelo Ferreyra, CeDInCI, https://sexoyrevolucion.cedinci.org/s/la-comunidad-del-archivo/item/11380

- **Frente de Lesbianas**: an alliance formed in 1994 in Buenos Aires to unite other lesbian groups and their shared political demands.
- **Asociación de Travestis Argentina** (ATA): founded in 1993 and later labelled the 'Asociación de Travestis, Transexuales y Transgéneros Argentina' this was an activist group aimed specifically at representing anyone under the trans umbrella, including travestis, transgender and transexual people.
- **Asociación de Mujeres Meretrices de Argentina** (AMMAR): a union of sex workers formed in 1994 which worked frequently with travesti sex workers in campaigning for their rights and the repeal of edict article 2°H.

Corporeal protest

In December of 1986, some 20 travestis gathered in the streets of Buenos Aires and participated in what would be known as the first public travesti protest. This gathering was organised in retaliation following the numerous travestis dying on the Pan-American highway caused by the police-driven displacement of sex-workers.

Participants revealed their bruises and scars received from police mistreatment, and one went topless, showing off her silicone breasts[14]. They spoke directly to journalists and onlookers, fighting against the invisibility and marginalisation that they had been forced to bear, and exposing themselves to the public eye.

This reflects Ochoa's theory of ungrateful citizenship in their article 'Ciudadanía Ingrata'[15], which follows the idea of diverting from a normative route towards practical citizenship and instead participating and making legal demands from a position of illegitimacy in the eyes of the state. During this 1986 protest, the small group of travestis made a monumental statement; they were people, and they were not going to tolerate abuse anymore. They lacked the ability to negotiate their rights from a legal standpoint, being that their identity itself was penalised under police edicts, so they had to employ a more radical technique, exposing their bodies and abuses as evidence for their demand to stop the police brutality and arbitrary arrests.

[14] Butierrez, M. and Simonetto, P. (2020) 'Las embajadoras de Travestilandia', *Moléculas Malucas*, 28 October. Available at: https://www.moleculasmalucas.com/post/las-embajadoras-de-travestilandia

[15] Marcia Ochoa, 'La ciudadanía ingrata: Trans-latinas, participación y pertenencia en la ausencia del reconocimiento' (2019) 1(2) *El lugar sin límites: Revista de Estudios y Políticas de Género* 69.

Practical guidance

This subsection presents some practices with which these movements challenged police violence.

The Frente de Lesbianas created a poster offering a comprehensive overview with practical guidance of what to do if detained by the police[16]. It gives legal advice, affirming individual rights and offering a free legal service via a phone number. Readers are advised to make note of the time that they are detained, and flag if it exceeds the limit (10 hours in the capital) as it would become an illegitimate deprivation of liberty. The Frente de Lesbianas employs established human rights to protect themselves against police discrimination and highlights the scope of the mistreatment they faced; beyond a societal prejudice against LGBT+ people and extending to breaches of established national human rights.

This community-authored countermeasure was created from the lived experience of other LGBT+ individuals who had been affected by police edicts and raids, and it demonstrates the importance of associations coming together and campaigning for the rights of themselves and their peers.



A 1996 magazine article: 'Travestis against police edicts'.[17]

This article describes fifteen travestis who presented complaints against several Buenos Aires police stations for their repeated persecution and detention under police edicts. The article claims that travestis would be detained for being together in public or for allegedly engaging in prostitution. It contains a section subtitled 'How the procedures work' which describes the process of being detained under a police edict. It sets out how detainees signed statements which they were not allowed to read, phone calls being exchanged for signatures, and appeals being deterred.

This information was vital to the LGBT+ and travesti community, who were vulnerable to being detained due to the police's discrimination. As this report has mentioned, the law surrounding police edicts was very inaccessible, meaning detained individuals were often unaware of the procedure that was occurring, what to expect from it, and how they could protect themselves.

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[16] María Luisa Peralta, 'Boicot. La última razzia a un boliche de lesbianas en Buenos Aires' (Moléculas Malucas, February 2021) accessed 24 September 2026. https://www.moleculasmalucas.com/post/la-%C3%BAltima-razzia-a-un-boliche-de-lesbianas-en-buenos-aires

[17] 'Travestis contra edictos policiales' (Página/12, 9 February 1996), Fondo Marcelo Ferreyra, CeDInCI https://sexoyrevolucion.cedinci.org/s/la-comunidad-del-archivo/item/2278

Campaigns:
The CHA spearheaded Campaña STOP Razzia, the 'stop razzia campaign'[18], which systematically documented police raids, not just against LGBT+ individuals but other non-conforming sectors of society. They compiled examples of police raids, from first-hand, written sources to external journalism, all forming one organised archive to document exactly who and how many people the police were detaining.

This archive corroborate the pattern supported by the numbers provided in Gentili's book, '*Me va a tener que acompañar'*, which commented on police edicts as a parallel criminal law; while they were formally administrative matters, the quantity of people affected by edicts and the abuse faced in their name created a sort of second criminal system, only with less legal rights and protections.

The combined efforts discussed in this section shaped the political landscape for LGBT+ individuals, leading to the eventual abolition and replacement of police edicts in 1998. Following Buenos Aires City gaining autonomy in 1994, the 1996 Constituent Convention resolved unanimously to end the edicts and enact a contravention code which would come into place in 1998 and form the foundation of Argentina's notoriously progressive society today.

The differing protest strategies were important in differing ways, with practical guidance offered through published materials being a more surreptitious, subtle manner of protest focused mostly of protecting rather than progressing, whereas instances of public gatherings and protests followed a more radical, 'ungrateful' path towards citizenship; LGBT+ communities refusing to conform to the law that discriminates against them and pushing for legal and societal reform at their own risk of being further punished.

Conclusion

This research demonstrates the complex reciprocal relationship between police powers and LGBT+ activism following Argentina's transition to democracy. Gathering a series of relevant archives, this report has examined evidence of police edicts in practice in Buenos Aires City following Argentina's transition to democracy, and it has synthesised existing literature to support the conclusion that police edicts and the discriminatory culture that enforced them were pivotal in shaping LGBT+ activism. Much protest was centred around and triggered by the unjust application of edicts, and in turn sought to expose the police's mistreatment not only through overturning the law but by tackling the culture beneath it.

Police edicts were written discriminatorily; articles 2°F and 2°H criminalised identity, not action, and the lack of oversight on these discretionary powers allowed the personal prejudice of police officers to detain at their own will. Retaliatory protest therefore did not confine itself to legal argument alone, employing strategies of public nudity and public gathering to fight for justice.

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[18] Comunidad Homosexual Argentina, 'Campaña STOP Razzia' (14 June 1991), Fondo Marcelo Ernesto Ferreyra, Archivo Histórico de la Comunidad Homosexual Argentina, https://chamemorias.ar/s/chamemorias/item/1839#lg=1&slide=0

The eventual repeal of edicts in 1998 was not a purely legal correction, but the outcome of years of activism that tackled the law and culture together, recognising that a law built on prejudice could not be brought down by legal challenge alone.

There were a few limitations to the scope of this research project, as discussed in the methodology. This research would benefit from being developed further and delving to look into other regions of Argentina, as well as discussing the implications of LGBT+ activism beyond the parameters of police edicts, as even after their repeal in 1996 there remained a large degree of discrimination towards LGBT+ communities, and police continued to abuse their powers. The journey towards LGBT+ rights in Argentina is a long one, and it is still ongoing in many areas, including working to eliminate societal discrimination. That is why it remains important to discuss the history behind today's laws, and understand the effects of protest strategies, both legally and socially, in the face of adversity.

Part 2: Reflections

Personal research impact

The opportunity to conduct this research project over the summer has been extremely beneficial and had a great impact on me. Beyond learning about the research topic itself, I have discovered more about my own abilities and preferences, and I have come to understand how I fare in a largely self-guided project. I would like to note my thanks and appreciation for the help of my supervisor over this period for giving guidance where needed and providing the opportunity to learn and develop over the research project.

My research topic is one of great personal interest to me, and I knew from the outset that whatever parameters my report came to discuss, I would be passionate about learning more. Deciding I wanted to focus on Argentina's jurisdiction, I had to narrow the scope of my research from the original title, which I struggled with for a while. I realised that I lacked contextual knowledge about the country beyond the basics, and so the beginning of my research remained a broader overlook on Argentina's recent political history. I was able to rely on my supervisor and his recommended textbooks to fill in the gaps in my awareness, which eventually helped me to better understand where my research topic stood in the social, legal and political background of the country, and aided me in narrowing my question.

My research project was based on archival research, which I had never done before. My degree in Law with Hispanic Law meant that I found myself initially wanting to rely more heavily on sources I was used to, such as published statutes, case law, and journal articles, but I soon came to realise that the legal principle I was discussing was poorly documented and quite inaccessible. It was through archives that I could piece together some articles of the police edicts, which entailed a lot of searching and reading through a wide variety of sources. I had to improve my ability to skim read and pick out relevant information, as well as navigate new websites and accustom myself to their navigation function. By the end of my research, I feel I am far more confident with this type of research, and I enjoy the benefits that come with it; while it may be more difficult to initially find the information I am searching for, I am always supplied with context to the topic through stories and reports of personal experiences.

I also found that my language skills have improved throughout conducting this research. Being based on archives in Argentina, almost everything I read was in Spanish. Thankfully, I started this research with a good understanding of the language as I study it as a part of my degree, however prior to this summer I had not had to read many academic sources in Spanish, so this was initially quite challenging. I had to learn which keywords would show me the results I wanted when navigating archives, and I also became accustomed to some more slang words. I found it was extremely interesting to study in another language to my native one, and it made me see some information in a different light. I also have had to work on my translation abilities, as I am writing this research output in English. As I stated in my report, I have had to acknowledge there are some nuances to the topic that my language capability might not have properly conveyed, but I have attempted to stay true to the meaning of the research, and I have left some words in Spanish where their English translation is not quite right.

All of these challenges have contributed towards my academic and personal development this summer. Beyond this, I feel that this summer has taught me principles and ideas that I can transmit into other areas of my life; I feel much more secure conducting independent research, and I have gained confidence in my time-management and organisation, all skills I hope will make me a better leader.

Leadership skills

Throughout my research project I feel that my skills have developed and adapted in many ways, all of which I hope will shape me to become a good leader. My understanding of global citizenship in particular has improved through this summer, as my research project engaged with ideas of human rights breaches under Argentina's legislation. The discussion surrounding police discrimination and violence against queer people in an unfamiliar political context made me reflect on the importance of established global human rights standards. Looking at the injustice that the LGBT+ community was met with in a quite recent history made me appreciate the existence of international human rights organisations that seek to ensure the rights of individuals across borders. I compared this with current global conflicts, and I contemplated the extreme variation in human experience across borders, and how in many parts of the world marginalised communities are still fighting for recognition. I believe looking at this holistically has helped me enhance my global awareness as well as my ideas of diversity and inclusion.

I also believe that my ability to strategise and visualise has improved throughout my research project. I persistently redefined the scope of my topic towards the beginning of the summer and had to plan my research around ideas that I felt I did not yet know very well. Far from my usual routine of learning at university and revising for exams, I had to carve my path as I went, planning for ideas to change, mistakes to be made, and I found it made my experience more interesting. I had to adapt to the possibility of reading an archive that might completely undermine a story I thought I began to understand, or for a newspaper clipping to suddenly alter my knowledge of the topic. I believe that this different learning experience has been extremely valuable in making my academic abilities more transferable to new topics and ideas.

Dissemination of research

I have not yet had the opportunity to disseminate my research at any events. I will be participating in the Laidlaw Annual Conference in October of 2027 and will be able to share my research there, an opportunity for which I am eager. Until then, I plan to continue developing my ideas, looking further into the topic and filling in any gaps I may have missed. I will share my project online through platforms such as the Laidlaw Network and LinkedIn so that I can share my findings with others, and I hope to be able to connect with people who have an interest in similar topics, and perhaps even collaborate in the future.

Future Career plans

A large part of my passion for being a part of the Laidlaw programme is due to the opportunity it provides to partake in a research project. I have always enjoyed studying for school and university, and it has been an amazing opportunity to be able to develop my abilities in a different environment where my research is independently led and I have been able to choose a topic based on my personal interests and beliefs. While I am still learning about my own preferences for an exact career path, I have known for a long time that I would be interested in research as a part of my future. I have always had an interest in international law, hence my degree in Law with Hispanic Law, and throughout my learning I have developed a specific preference for learning about and advocating for human rights. This research opportunity has only further solidified my desire to work on researching international human rights law in my future, and I have become more open to the idea of remaining in higher education past my bachelor's degree.

Afterword

Partaking in the Laidlaw research summer has been extremely beneficial for my development, both academically and personally. I have gained new abilities and sharpened old ones, all while learning about a topic I find extremely interesting and important, which I look forward to being able to share with others. I am very grateful for this opportunity provided by the Laidlaw Programme, for my supervisor's guidance throughout, and I appreciate the work that has gone into pushing myself and my fellow scholars to become the best version of ourselves. I am excited to continue to learn and grow throughout my Laidlaw scholarship.