

## **On Transparency: Christian Drug Rehabilitation Centers in Guatemala**

Kevin Lewis O'Neill, University of Toronto

This lecture was part of the Religion, Medicine, and Law Lecture Series.

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### **Marie Griffith, Director of the Danforth Center on Religion and Politics**

On behalf of all of us at the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics at Washington University, I want to welcome you to the fourth and final lecture in this semester series on religion, medicine, and law. Let me again thank Professor Leigh Schmidt for organizing the lecture series. It's really moved the Center into new and important territory that we hadn't covered before. I think all of us faculty members are excited about new possibilities and opportunities for this area, so it's been really terrific and we are really grateful to those of you who have been available for many of these.

David Craig opened our series with his talk on Obamacare and American values. Wendy Cadge continued this series with her work on hospital chaplaincy and her lecture, *Paging God: Religion and the Halls of Medicine*. Scott Morris spoke to us a month ago on the faith community's role in healthcare, and today we welcome Kevin Lewis O'Neill to speak about Christian drug rehabilitation centers in Guatemala. So again, we are very glad you are here to join us, and please know that you're all very welcome to stay after the talk for a reception from 6:00-6:30 in the foyer just outside the back doors.

Kevin O'Neill holds an undergraduate degree in philosophy from Fordham University, a master's in theological studies from Harvard Divinity School, and a master's and Ph.D. in cultural and social anthropology from Stanford. But I have to also tell you that he is a local coming to us from Webster Groves. He has taught both anthropology and theology in Guatemala, and he served for two years in the Department of Religious Studies in the American Studies program at Indiana University before moving to his current University home. He is now an assistant professor in the Department for the Study of Religion and the Center for Diaspora and Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto. Professor O'Neill is the author of two single-authored books and numerous articles and other publications, as well as the editor or co-editor of several other volumes. His own single authored books are these: *City of God: Christian Citizenship in Post-War Guatemala* (which was published in 2010 by the University of California Press) and *Secure the Sole: Christian Piety and Gang Prevention in Guatemala* (which was published earlier this year, also by California Press). And already, very early in his career, he's been the recipient of numerous grants, fellowships, and honors, and is a sought after speaker for his research, so we look forward to see what's to come. His talk for us today is titled: *On Transparency: Christian Drug Rehabilitation Centers in Guatemala*. Please join me in welcoming him now.

### **Main Speaker: Kevin Lewis O'Neill, University of Toronto**

Good afternoon. Thank you so much, Marie, for that great introduction and for the invitation. It's good to be back in St. Louis. I was wondering when I would be asked about my high school. This series is tremendous for me in terms of medicine, law, and religion and in terms of where I am at right now in my research. As Marie mentioned, I'm an anthropologist and I work on religion and politics in the Americas—it's ethnographic work, which usually engages or involves long stays in Guatemala (particularly Guatemala city). Before I present my talk, I tend to put some of my assumptions on the table. I have three working assumptions with my kind

of work. The first is, and this isn't a very courageous assumption, that the Americas is a hemispheric object of study. My study of Guatemala is intimately related to the study, I think, of the United States, at least that's how I pitched my first job in American Studies. The second one is that with the Americas, I see three defining issues taking place today. When there was an era in which state-sponsored violence was the object of study, I see three issues defining politics today: democracy, security, and drugs, which is the order of my first two books about democratization, securitization, and today, as I extend my work into the war on drugs. The final one, and this is where the religion and politics connect, is that I find new forms of Christianity, particularly Pentecostalism, as an extraordinary window into these processes. In a place like Guatemala, we'll see today, it's the growing Pentecostal community that takes up the work of a chronically inadequate state. So when it comes to democracy, security, and drugs, I'm keenly interested in how Pentecostals govern themselves and others. The focus of this talk is going to be these Pentecostal drug rehabilitation centers, which you'll learn more about. The larger philosophical question driving this book project is about what I would call predation, or the kind of predatorial dimensions of pastoralism, so it's a larger reflection about kind of the darker underside of what it means to pastor or govern a population. The folks today will be on digital photography. My last point will just be that we will see several kinds of images today. The most dominant images that you'll see, which you'll be able to recognize quickly, are images taken by and used for Pentecostal drug rehabilitation centers—these are images that directors and workers take. The other images will be more contextual, and I can speak more about them in the question and answer. With that, I'm going to read my paper, which is standard practice for anthropologists. It's entitled *Transparency*, or at least *On Transparency*.

Carlos had fallen. This much was clear, but the pastor pushed the point, dragging his thumb and index finger across the surface of a smartphone, until the image rubber-banded, bouncing back to fit the device's zoom limit. A pair of soiled trousers filled the screen. "This photo," the pastor whispered, while tracing the image with his finger, "is so transparent." "It's a blessing, a testimony, it shows us the soul." We spoke on the first floor of a Pentecostal drug rehabilitation center. These informal, unregulated, and largely for profit centers keep pace with Guatemala's growing rapprochement with crack cocaine. They warehouse users against their will for months, and sometimes for years. "Carlos is here locked up," the pastor explained. "We found him in the streets, high on crack and totally out of control." He held his device up to me. "Look at how dirty he is—that face, that filth, those eyes." The pastor then pinched the image, snapping the photo back into size, adding almost as an afterthought, "so we took him." It is this imbrication of taking photos and taking men that my talk today explores. Assessing not only the visual technologies that forge new forms of social surveillance, but also the Christian ontology that prompts these pastors to see and seize drug users. Transparency is central to this story, but rather than a constituent of liberal democratic society, a right to knowledge, or the free exchange of ideas, transparency as a Christian category foregrounds a tacit theological assumption: it is that sin renders the body opaque and the soulless secret. We have lost sight of each other. In an effort to overcome this obstacle, directors of drug rehabilitation centers across Guatemala City arm themselves with digital devices in the hopes of reading the body for signs of the soul. It's an imperfect effort that generates vast archives of digital content. These are photographs and videos of users buying and selling, smoking and feigning, recovering and relapsing. A descendant of the missionary photograph with shades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century mugshot, these images constitute the drug users of a particular type, with a recognizable look. While the body has long been a contested terrain upon which Christians distinguish the sinner from the saved, these images facilitate the

literal arrest of the referent. They underlie the users' extrajudicial incarceration. "How long has Carlos been here?", I asked. "For months," the pastor answered. "Has he even been outside?", I wondered. "Not once," he replied.

At the outer edges of today's war on drugs and amid extreme levels of biomedical inequality, my talk today asks a pair of questions. They are, at their most ethnographic, how and to what effect has a Christian quest for transparency become a technique of capture? An answer to either of these questions adds ethnographic specificity to the optics that currently organize the day's war on drugs, as well as the Pentecostalism that drug prohibition makes possible. To toggle between the front and back stages of these digital images, as my fieldwork does, is to appreciate not simply a Pentecostal politics of seen, but also Christian conventions of being seen.

These centers, with their salvific lines of sight, ensnare users such as Carlos with a moral drama of self-transformation. They face the fall and fidget with themselves to comport their bodies in ways that render themselves properly transparent. This interest in transparency is not without context, but the story starts neither in the streets of Guatemala City nor in its Pentecostal drug rehabilitation centers, but rather in the nostrils of North Americans.

A gourmet soft drug in the 1960s, cocaine found its clientele courtesy of President Richard Nixon. His 1969 "operation intercept," with its aerial sprays of Mexican help fields and its crack down on Mexican marijuana smugglers, killed just enough cannabis to peak American's interest in cocaine. As demand soared, cocaine corridors connected Medellín to Miami, all by way of the Caribbean. The United States responded with hugely militarized anti-drug policies, but these increasingly expensive, progressively effective, maritime blockages prompted trackers to make Central American their principle transit route. Today planes, boats, and submarines ferry cocaine along the Pacific Coast to northern Guatemala. And there, beyond the reaching of US interdiction efforts, traffickers prep their product for its trip north—and they do so at a growing clip. In 2004, some 10% of the cocaine produced in the Andes and bound for the United States passed through Guatemala. Today more than 80% of this product touches Guatemalan soil. The movement of all this material comes with considerable logistics—equipment, labor, infrastructure. Traffickers need all of these, but pay for none of them in cash. Instead, they pay with cocaine, which actually holds very little value in Guatemala. There are not enough Guatemalans who can afford the drug. To monetize this material to turn cocaine into cash, laboratories mix the drug with baking soda to make crack cocaine. Smoked through a pipe one rock at a time, crack is as cheap as it is fleeting. Crack leaves you hungry for more.

In the United States, decidedly racist anti-drug policies tripled the country's prison population in response to crack cocaine. In Guatemala City, with a homicide rate nearly twenty times the US average, crack cocaine has not been criminalized so much as Pentecostalized. The Pentecostalization of crack begins with conversion. Once overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, Guatemala is today as much as 60% Pentecostal and charismatic Christian. The sudden shift in religious affiliation occurred alongside an equally dramatic retreat of state services. Today less than 2% of Guatemala's total health benefit addresses issues of mental health. One effect has been a growing network of informal and largely unregulated Pentecostal drug rehabilitation centers. These are one-time garages, factories, mortuaries, barracks, and apartment buildings. Each has been repurposed for rehabilitation with razor wires, steel bars, and iron gates. Inside, pastors practice something that's called theological therapy. This is a mash up of Pentecostal theology, twelve step programming, and self-help psychology. It's most basic assumption is that captivity will give way to conversion, and it rarely does. If this bald fact has done nothing to slow the growth of these centers, then the reason is simple: they provide a practical solution to a concrete problem. Drug use is up, state resources are down, and Pentecostalism is the discourse of change in Guatemala: Jesus saves. It's a theological construction that carries considerable consequences. Today,

more Guatemalans find themselves literally tied up in Pentecostal drug rehabilitation centers than locked up in mass security prisons. If photography facilitates this Christian captivity, much of this has to do with the rise of affordable, portable technologies. Over the last decade, Guatemala's mobile phone market has grown by 550%, while the average price of a handset has dropped by more than half. Today, 15 million Guatemalans own and operate 22 million cellular phones. This means, among many other things, that there is a camera phone in the pocket of nearly every Pentecostal. Deputizing the faithful as missionary photographs, or photographers, this mobile technology provides a new platform for an age old ontology about the body's optical relationship to the soul. "Everyone changes their story," the pastor explained, "even if a little." He slid a cell phone into his pocket, "but if you have a photograph," he said, "or better yet a video, then you can really see a person."

The pastor's optimism is probably best described as cruel, for absolute clarity is impossible, at least by Christian standards. The entire history of the religion can be written as one extended effort to really see another person: testimonies, confessions, and spiritual exercises. Each plumbs the murky depths of the soul, with the body always promising, but never really providing allegeable semiotics of salvation. The frustrations that inevitably follow are fundamental to the Christian condition, but so too is the hunt for honesty, simplicity, and above all transparency. Transparency is the goal, and yet also it's the impasse, at least this is what Augustine argues and Pentecostals, by and large, have adopted. The story goes something like this: before the Biblical fall, when the blessed lived in paradise, everyone enjoyed the most fundamental of transparencies. All souls could see each other. Nothing was hidden. But then sin happens, making the human body not just mortal, but also muddled. The corruption of human nature obscured the once visible soul with an opaque body, dividing the one from the many while also giving rise to language and belief. For in the absence of total transparency, the fallen could only know what they had been told, and so could only believe what had been said. This explains why Augustine bristles at the use of external words to express inner thoughts. Every utterance marks a primal fall from transparency. "The reason all these words are uttered," Augustine laments, "is the abyss of this world and the blindness of the flesh, by which thoughts cannot be seen." And so in stark contrast to contemporary social theories that celebrate the public as a theater for debating and deliberating, that elevate language as the medium for reaching understanding, Augustine mourns the impossibility of never really knowing anyone. (16:00)

"Some of the movements of our souls," he writes, "appear in the face and especially in our eyes." But nothing works, not really. Instead, anxious efforts at exposure often become outright mechanisms of control. Take that photograph of Carlos, it marks the moment of his abduction. "How did Carlos get here?" I ask the pastor. "I told you," he answered, "crack cocaine." I clarified my question, "but who brought him here?". The pastor reached for his cell phone, "we took him from the streets," he said. "His family called me, they couldn't manage him anymore, so they paid me to bring him her." The pastor flipped through his collection of jpgs. and mp4's, "by force?" I asked. "Force," he answered, "I brought him here by force. Who wants to be here?" By here the pastor means a modest two story house in a troubled part of Guatemala City. He and his family live on the first floor, sixty two users live on the second floor. Steel bars fortify the windows, while an iron gate separates the two levels. "I have a video," the pastor offered. "It's of us bringing Carlos here." He pressed play, and while the audio proved to be a non-starter, the video was as clear as day. Three men from the center backed Carlos against a wall, two grabbed him by the arms while the third lifts his legs. Carlos struggles, but only in vain. The three men then pull Carlos into the backseat of a car. The video ends as abruptly as it begins, with a total running time of twenty six seconds. The content of this video is critical to Carlos's capture, and as is the photograph. Read through a theology of transparency, Carlos's disheveled state, attempt at escape, and inevitable arrest, all

index a troubled interiority, his body bears the outward signs of inner turmoil. Yet just as essential are the dozens of files that the pastor scrolled past to find the one labeled “Carlos.” Organized into lists and batches, filtered into folders and then subfolders, the Pastor’s handheld digital library creates the structural possibility for meaningful difference. His archive sets the conditions for signification, as the archive always has. In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, first in France and then in the United States, mention of photography coincided with the rise in criminology. The two entangled, in fact, with the mugshot. Inspired by the empiricism of botany and zoology, a French police officer named Alphonse Bertillon, mapped criminal bodies with photographic precision, ultimately standardizing the genre with a split screen. A proper mugshot would consist of a portrait and a profile. The format gained popularity as Bertillon proved prolific, documenting delinquency at a rate that quickly outpaced the possibilities of taxonomy itself. In less than a decade, Bertillon systematized more than 100,000 photographs across a vast network of file drawers and identification cards, archiving as many as 200 images a day. While his immediate attention might have been a system that could calculate rates of recidivism, the consequences of his pursuit proved to be nothing short of a semiotic of the soul. Emerging alongside such soft sciences, physiognomies and phrenology, the mug shot prompted experts to read deviance directly onto the body through a series of contrasting visual signs. Sloping heads, droopy eyes, and wide mouths, these distinctions shifted conversations away from episodic concerns about a criminal towards an empirical interest in the criminal. The mugshot made it to Guatemala, at least in spirit, not long after it became standard practice in San Francisco, New York, Cleveland, and Chicago. Its arrival in Guatemala City, however, did not ride the coattails of criminological reform, so much as the piety of the Presbyterian Church.

A graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, the Reverend, Dr. Edward M. Haymaker, travelled from Warrensburg, Missouri to Guatemala City in 1887. He made this thirty day trip at the insistence of the Guatemalan government. In an era of liberal reform, the Guatemalan president understood Protestantism as a means to an end. The religion, he reasoned, would transform illiterate Guatemalans into a god-fearing proletarians. Haymaker had slightly different ends in mind. Inspired by a then popular social gospel, Haymaker set out to save, as he called them, “the great unwashed.” And for Haymaker, their dirt was as much a visual distinction as a moral one. His extensive photographic work routinely juxtaposes indigenous Guatemalans dressed in traditional clothes with those dressed in western clothes. Haymaker’s missionary photography, in fact, joined a much larger movement within Protestant circles to manipulate the mugshot’s capacity to distinguish. But rather than a profile and a portrait of the same person, the Evangelical innovation paired two portraits of the same person. Separated by not just time, but also salvation, the portrait on the left depicted the life before Christ while the portrait on the right presented a life after Christ. The pastor’s most compelling digital sub-folder is titled “before and after.” “We take a picture when they come in the center,” the pastor explained, “and we take a picture when they leave.” The pastor’s son then edits the two images together until the sinner and the saved stand side-by-side. To listen to the pastor read these images is to understand just how important Protestantism has been to the development of criminological thought. It’s also an opportunity to hear the extent to which criminology constitutes the logic of Christian concern, both traffic and techniques of transparency. The pastor opened a file labeled “Lester.” Two portraits of the same person filled the screen, and yet the quality of the users clothes, the clarity of his eyes, and the cleanliness of this clothes all differed in kind. The Lester on the left had given way to the Lester on the right. The pastor then drew my attention to Lester’s skin. “We

found this guy in the streets,” he explains, “and just look at his skin. His skin is so dark.” “Did you know the streets make the body darker?” he explained, “and the drugs, the drugs turn the skin browner and then black.” He looked up from his phone, adding, “it only takes a month, maybe two, for drugs to change a person’s physical features.” I took this as an opportunity to pull the conversation back to Carlos. “Does Carlos have an after photo?” I asked, and the pastor shook his head no. He said, “he doesn’t, Carlos hasn’t changed yet.”

I asked Carlos why this was the case, why he hadn’t changed yet. On the second floor of the pastor’s center with sixty one users milling about, Carlos considered my question against the backdrop of our ongoing conversations about drugs, dependency, and what we both understand to be his unlawful detention. He heard my question, thought about it, and told me to “go fuck myself.” And Carlos had a point. By the time I asked him my question, Carlos had been inside the center for a year, without ever having been outside to visit his family, to take a walk, or even to go to Church. Instead he jockeyed for a position not just over scarce resources, but also the politics of representation. For these users know the power of photography better than most anyone. His answer to my question, in fact, answers what **[indistinguishable]** argued, that the photograph allows the photographer to conceal elusively the preparation to which he subjects the scene to be recorded. Or to return to Carlos’s extended answer, “all this shit is staged, all of it. It doesn’t matter what you do, it only matters what the pastor shows your family.” And this is true. Families pay the pastor a monthly fee to keep their loved ones off the streets, but the terms of their confinement are set by none other than the pastor himself. (24:09) There is no state oversight or industry standard, no legal arbitration or medical examination. In place of diagnostic tests and patient files, there are digital photographs that detail the extent to which a user is either lost or found. The predictable problem is that the pastor is more than capable of manipulating this media. Some of this comes in the form of editing actual images. Several of the pastor’s before photographs are obviously staged with distant stares and remorseful postures. So too are his after photographs. That fact that Carlos’s skin is noticeably lighter with Christ is decidedly suspicious. And more telling than the use of pre-programed photo filters, however, are the actual outtakes that appear in the pastor’s unedited videos. These extended cuts show the pastor giving stage directions to the users about what to say, where to move, and how to act. One video has an original running time of one minute and fifty four seconds. The first moment shows the lanky legs of a young child as he dashes into the right side of the frame to make a funny face and then runs off screen. But the key actors are the pastor and the user. The intended plot is for the latter, a thirty year old man, to enter the Center on his own accord. He will walk himself into rehab. This, of course, was not the case. The pastor hunted the user down, wrestled him into submission, and then drove him to the Center’s front door. But more important than this backstory is how this bit of street theater sheds some light on transparency as a mode of governance as a technique of rule. This scene pulls into focus the amount of work that goes into rendering the user transparent. The video takes place just outside the Center’s front door with two cars parked perpendicular to each other. A blue car is at the top of the frame and a red car is on the left side of the frame. The pastor casually leans against the blue car, while the user stands with shoulders slumped. He looks exhausted. The pastor tells him, “there’s only shit here, there’s only death here.” He points to the curb and then to the front door. With the sound of adults snickering in the background, the pastor gives his first set of directions. “Start there,” he says, pointing to the curb, “and then start walking to the front door, so we can take this video.” The pastor’s voice grows heavier, “and then afterwards,” he says, “I can show your family how you

showed up here looking like shit, now come on let's do this." The user walks to the curb, takes his spot, and then turns to face the Center's door. Then something remarkable happens. The user pauses for three full seconds. He stands still to mark the beginning of a new scene, as if someone might lean into the frame with a clapper board to announce a fresh take. Unimpressed with the user's appreciation for this video's eventual edit, the pastor grows aggravating, barking "just get over there and start to walk towards the door, just get over there. Walk over there. Walk, walk, walk." The user takes six steps and then looks back at the pastor, reaching his hand out for moral support, which the pastor accepts as they both enter the Center together. Of interest is that the pastor eventually edited this video down from fifty four seconds to thirteen seconds. The clean cut shows the user walking from the curb to the center, entering the front door with the pastor's support. The shortened video also ends just moments before the two actually walk into the Center. This is because the pastor makes eye contact with the camera at the very end of the video. He looks directly into the lens, only for a moment, but in a way that upsets the entire scene. In theatrical terms, the pastor breaks frame, and in doing so reminds most everyone involved of the power of framing. In the cinema-graphic sense of the framing of a movie, the pastor literally frames the user by providing stage directions. The pastor tells him where to go, what to say, and when to say it. In other videos with other users, the pastor even yells "cut" and "action" to start and stop specific scenes. But just as a movie can be framed, so too can the innocent, and this video frames this user. It sets him up by scripting the before that will one day stand in contrast to an after that the pastor himself will produce. And in yet another video with yet another user, the pastor looks directly into the camera as he points at the user's face. "This guy," he says, "is as stubborn as a mule, all he wants to do is eat straw." Paraphrasing an expression probably better left untranslated, the scene signals how visual culture has come a battleground upon which users fight for their freedom. This war is asymmetrical, but it is not hegemonic. The pastor does not control every means of visual production in the Center. Digital photography is the most concrete mechanism of control, but there is a wider visual register of expression. This starts with the most minor of missives, with notes written by users to their families. Scribbled on scraps of paper and then passed to visitors when no one else is watching, these illicit letters ask their loved ones for basic necessities—food, medicine, and toiletries, for example. "Please call my dad," reads one note, "Oscar needs his clothes." And these scraps often give way to sketches that traffic carceral imaginaries of work camps and chain gangs, with the user's time spent inside the Center often equated with the emptiness of breaking rocks into pebbles. Lined with Biblical passages, these sketches explore the absurdity of compulsory rehabilitation. The most compelling moments of self-expression, however, come in the form of Chicano prison art. It first appeared in the 1940s in the penitentiaries of Texas, California, and New Mexico, and now it flourishes in Guatemala's Pentecostal drug rehabilitation centers, laying quick claim to how interconnected these centers are with state run prisons, not just in Central America, but also in the United States, for one of the few materials allowed into the Center's second floor are colored pencils. The stenciling and iconography drip with religious imagery-- Jesus's bleeding heart breaks the chains of slavery, doves take flight to announce that you can be free on the inside, while Christ stands crestfallen, seemingly too ashamed to face the materiality of mass incarceration. And as with most of these montages, the artist represents himself, his self-portrait appears at the very bottom right corner of this drawing. He is behind bars and framed by scripture that he himself has invented. "I didn't know that when I got out of jail in Guatemala," the artist explained, "that I was chained up by cocaine because all I thought about when I was in jail was that I wanted to free." He continued, "but I didn't think about my spirit, my soul, that I

was chained up. Basically I got out of jail and came back to jail again. Now that I'm in rehab it's like I'm locked up again." Interconnected institutions provide a window into the political economy of transparency, but so too do those colored pencils. The pastor otherwise provides these users only the most minimal of means. He offers them tortillas and three very thin bowls of soup every day. Bathing takes place across a complicated schedule, with each user given a few minutes a week to wash themselves. Toilet paper, shampoo, and toothbrushes all come, or don't, from family members. The same is true of food items—fruits, vegetables, and bread come, or don't, from family members. And the logic continues with clothes, a user can wear the same t-shirt and pants for months on end. He can also go without a shave for that same stretch of time. It all depends on the user's family and friends. And while the Guatemalan currency carries a deflated value inside the center, other objects do not. Socks, in fact, are worth a great deal, and more so in December than in March. All of this establishes the conditions for a cashless economic system in which services and goods are traded at negotiated rates. And this bartering is near impossible to prevent. The pastor even went so far as to outlaw board games once he realized that monopoly money had gained actual currency within the community; a collared shirt once sold for 1,000 monopoly dollars. Carlos does not have a collared shirt. His t-shirt is threadbare and he needs new shoes. The pastor's tortillas and soup are also not enough, but this, too, is part of his punishment. For Carlos used to work in the United States, sending money back to his family on a regular basis. He worked construction in Chicago, while also selling small amounts of marijuana and cocaine. He sold a little and smoke a little, all while sending money back to his parents and five sisters. "I was working," Carlos remembered. "Working, working, and sending my money back home." Carlos's family used the remittances to buy a better roof, as well as to send two of Carlos's sisters to school. Then there was a car accident. The details are not clear, but the consequences are obvious. Carlos suffered a severe head injury. As his hospitalization in the United States set the condition for his deportation, his behavior became increasingly erratic. He could hold a conversation, but he had headaches and mood swings, as well as inexplicable bouts of anger. Back in Guatemala, Carlos began to consume larger amounts of marijuana and cocaine. He claims to have been self-medicating, but his family argues that the drugs themselves caused his headaches and mood swings, the cocaine sparked those inexplicable bouts of anger. At some point, Carlos left for Guatemala City, where he lived on the streets until his father paid the pastor to bring him to rehab. "We stopped sending him clothes," his sister told me, "and we stopped sending him food." During the first year of Carlos's incarceration, three of his five sisters moved to Guatemala City to look for work. "He'd just give it away or trade with people for stuff he didn't need," another sister explained. Adding, "he never appreciated the gifts, he never took care of them, he never used them." Intuiting [indistinguishable] most fundamental observations about the gifts, namely the moral obligation to reciprocate, Carlos's family grew tired of their brother receiving gifts, but never countering with his own recovery. "He just doesn't care about us," another sister added. Carlos's sisters are only half right. Carlos does trade out his gifts, but this is standard practice. While some users leverage their gifts to increase their relative position within the center's social hierarchy, the vast majority mobilized their limited resources to fashion themselves as saved, that is to use every means available to look after as opposed to before. The barter for goods within the center to strike the right bodily compartment for their families. To be properly shaved with a clean shirt and fresh breath suggests to loved ones that change is afoot, that a conversion may have already happened. And so users routinely forge strategic alliances by way of baked goods and colored pencils, using these gifts to borrow a collared shirt or buy a second hand comb. But Carlos never really caught



on, and so his sisters cut him off. And the consequences of this miscommunication have been brutal. A little more than a year after his abduction, Carlos does not appear any closer to being saved, instead he looks positively shipwrecked. Carlos wears pair of second hand pants. The waist is far too wide for them to sit on his hips, and so he cinches them with a belt that is itself much too long. Carlos also rolls up his pant legs into fat cuffs, with one always longer than the other. On occasion, Carlos even compliments this look with a strip of t-shirt that he wraps around his forehead. Of importance, is that Carlos does not generally stand out from the other sixty one users. The only difference is that most of these men strategize between family visits for how to pass as recovered, how to stage a transparent rectitude. Carlos does not largely because he cannot. At their wits ends, Carlos's sisters froze their brother's ability to stylize himself into the very subject they so desperately want to see. Without cans of beans or the occasional candy bar, how could Carlos ever trade up those pairs of pants for a pair of slacks? Carlos's sisters visit him every month, to connect with their brother to be sure, but also to speak with the pastor. They want to know, understandably so, if Carlos has changed, if he's ready to leave. The most important part of this monthly ritual comes in the form of a photograph. One of Carlos's sister takes a picture of him with her smartphone. She then sends the image immediately to her parents. Some eight hours north of Guatemala City, Carlos's father assesses the image to decide whether he should pay for another month of rehabilitation. Frustrated and yet full of compassion, the father explained to me over the phone that Carlos "just doesn't look ready." And he doesn't. To see Carlos's first fourteen photographs, each representing a month of Carlos's captivity, is to witness a set of seemingly static images. They form and archive where in which no meaningful difference appears. Carlos is more alert in some of the photographs than in others, his clothes are also cleaner in some than in others, and his hair obeys him from time to time, but never do these changes coordinate in such a way as to achieve a single recognizable image of transformation. The pastor, in this sense, is right. Carlos has not changed. Instead, what appears across these fourteen photographs is a composite portrait of arrested development, of a user to to gloss Clifford Geertz, "suspended in webs of significance he himself has not spun." The mechanics make sense, ever since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when photography, criminology, and missiology became entangled, photographs such as these have not only made moments of intervention absolutely dependent upon representation, but they've also prompted people to expect the soulful change enacted through such images. To appreciate the before, while craving the after. The semiotics of this split screen correlates physical appearance with individual character through an arrange of techniques. For while Carlos remains as stubborn as a mule, the pastor has not yet autocorrected Carlos's skin color, and he never seems to give Carlos the right stage directions. All the while, his sisters starve him from the very means by which he could manipulate his own image, and so Carlos finds himself rendered transparent for all to see. "Then why don't you just let them take a good picture of you?", I ask Carlos, but just stared past me. It was, admittedly, the wrong question to ask. Made for the sake of expediency in the hopes of just getting Carlos out of the center, the question evoked the very era in which Alphonse Bertillon and Edward Haymaker drew upon advances in halftone printing to render their subjects discernable and thus detainable. My question also inadvertently asked Carlos to clean up and out, even if only for an afternoon. "I wouldn't know where to start," Carlos admitted. As I move towards a conclusion, I want to think about Carlos's aside and a photograph I think it evokes. Published in Thomas F. Burns' *Professional Criminals in America*, published in 1886. Burns was the head of the New York City police department and the champion of what was then called visual criminology. His book presents biographical sketches and photographs of the United States' leading criminals, with one

particular image confirming what Carlos already knew: that most people actually don't know where to start when having their picture taken. Within the frame, four police officers wrestle with a detained man to take his mug shot. An officer takes each of his legs while two others secure his shoulders. All the while, a hand controls his head by way of his hair. Burns notes in an essay titled, *Why are Thieves Photographed?*, "you see, thieves must dress up to their business, if they are among poor people they dress shabbily, if among well-to-do folks they put on style." It's a great thing to escape notice and some men have a good deal of trouble to do it. Carlos has a good deal of trouble to do it. He knows well that establishing one's own transparency is an achievement, yet the striking juxtaposition between Burn's image of the detained man in any of Carlos' monthly photographs is not simply the brute presence of the state in the image from 1884, but the expectation that Carlos should be able to corral himself for the sake of the photograph, that he should be able to keep his own feet still, pull his own shoulders back, and hold his own head straight. The expectation that Carlos should be able to do any of these marks the Pentecostals and the drug prohibition makes possible today. It's a Pentecostalism organized not just by a kind of visual predation, but also a theological anthropology that demands its subject to master himself against all odds. And yet without any of these interventions, Carlos keeps taking the same photograph, to which his sister and his father keep replying, "he just doesn't look ready." And so Carlos remains there, still there, even now. Thank you.