



Unit 4 Truth and Justice

Introduction

By the 1980's the junta faced scrutiny for corruption and human rights abuses. In an effort to sidetrack global and domestic attention, the government attempted to reclaim the Falkland Islands, *Las Islas Malvinas*, from the British. Assuming the British wouldn't invest much effort to save the islands was a miscalculation that eventually led to the fall of the regime. Raul Alfonsín's civilian government replaced the military junta in December, 1983.

Alfonsín took over on the 10th of December and created CONADEP (La Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas) on December 15. Alfonsín wanted to identify those who planned and issued orders, those who followed orders, and those who carried orders to excess. Ernesto Sabato, Ricardo Colombres, René Favaloro, Hilario Fernández Long, Carlos T. Gattinoni, Gregorio Klimovsky, Rabbi Marshall Meyer, Bishop Jaime de Nevares, Eduardo Rabossi, Magdalena Ruiz Guiñazú, Santiago Marcelino López, Hugo Diógenes Piucill and Horacio Hugo Huarte compiled *Nunca Más*, " ... a comprehensive catalogue of contemporary savagery."(Shapiro)

In *Unit 4 Truth and Justice*, students will examine how Argentina began to heal from the trauma of *El Proceso*, the dirty war that terrorized the country from 1976-1983, by researching primary and secondary source documents.

Essential Questions for Lessons I-III

- How can we use primary source documents to learn about the past?
- What causes human beings to terrorize other human beings?
- How do traumatized nations begin to heal?
- Is truth based on one's perception?
- What is the process of uncovering secret truths?
- Why do government policies towards human rights abuse change over time?

Objectives

Students will:

- read and analyze the prologue to *Nunca Más* by Ernesto Sábato

- trace the human rights policies from the Alfonsín to Kirchner governments
- conduct a mock trial of Argentine human rights criminals

Lesson I Prologue to *Nunca Más*

A. Materials

- Nunca Más*-Report of National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP), 1984
http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/neveragain/neveragain_001.htm

B. Activity Sheets

- Unit 4 Lesson I Prologue to *Nunca Más*

C. Suggested Readings

- Gareau, Frederick H. *Argentina's Dirty War* excerpted from the book *State Terrorism and the United States From Counterinsurgency to the War on Terrorism*. Clarity Press, 2004
www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Terrorism/Argentina_STATUS.html
- Shapiro, Arthur, "Nunca Más: the report of the Argentine National Commission on the Disappeared." *The New Leader*. 69 (Oct. 20, 1986): p.17
- Zaretsky, Natasha. "Never Again: The Legacy of Nunca Más and the Promise of Truth in Democratic Argentina." *Genocide Chronicles*, Wordpress.
<https://genocidechronicles.wordpress.com/2015/02/15/never-again-the-legacy-of-nunca-mas-and-the-promise-of-truth-in-democratic-argentina/>

D. Assessments

- Activity sheet responses
- Discussions
- Research skills

E. Extension Activities

- Listen to the Krista Tippitt playlist of songs dedicated to human rights. *On Being*
<http://www.onbeing.org/program/laying-dead-rest/playlist/967?embed=1>

"Desaparecidos" by Denis Plante	"Washington Bullets" by The Clash
"Tacuba: 12/12" by the Kronos Quartet	"Victor Jara's Hands" by Calexico
"Mothers of the Disappeared" by The Vitimin String Quartet	"The Hands of Victor Jara " by Chuck Brodsky
"Mothers of the Disappeared" by U2	"Sombras" by Hector Ivan Garcia
"Pequena" by Mercedes Sosa	"Valseana" by Sergio Assad
"Sera Posible el Sur" by Mercedes Sosa	

Instructions for Lesson I. Prologue to *Nunca Más*

Arthur Shapiro says, "Readers of *Nunca Más* will come away revolted, shaken and ultimately numbed by the repetitiousness with which the barbarism is inventoried, yet unenlightened as to how it all came to pass." The prologue, written by Ernesto Sábato, discusses the Commission's task, people who were vulnerable to human rights violations from 1976-1983, and the reaction of the repressors to investigations. The Commission also considered the need for truth and justice as opposed to vindictiveness or vengeance. However, Sábato's prologue, considered by many to be controversial, was rewritten under current President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. In this lesson, students will analyze the prologue to learn about the Commission's task, human rights, truth, justice, and why this document is controversial.

Step 1

Initiate the activity by discussing one or more quotes written by Ernesto Sábato.

1. *“This went far beyond what might be considered criminal offences, and takes us into the shadowy realm of crimes against humanity.”*
2. *“A feeling of complete vulnerability spread throughout Argentine society, coupled with the fear that anyone, however innocent, might become a victim of the never-ending witch-hunt.”*
3. *“It was simply that the ‘anti-subversive’ struggle, like all hunts against witches or those possessed, had become a demented generalized repression, and the word ‘subversive’ itself came to be used with a vast and vague range of meaning.”*

Step 2

Assign *Prologue to Nunca Más* for homework. Students will complete activity sheet *Unit 4 Activity Sheet I. Prologue to Nunca Más*.

Step 3.

Students will share responses to homework activity sheet in whole class discussion.

Lesson II Presidential Human Rights Abuse Policies 1983-2014

- A. Materials
 - a. Internet
 - b. School library
 - c. Markers and poster board for Lesson II wall chart
- B. Activity Sheets
 - a. Unit 4 Lesson II Presidential Human Rights Abuse Policies 1983-2014
- C. Suggested Readings
 - a. The *Latin American Government Documents Archive (LAGDA)*
<http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/archives/lagda/>
 - b. The *U.S. Department of State's Human Rights Report*
<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/>
- D. Assessments
 - a. Activity sheet responses
 - b. Discussions
 - c. Group participation
 - d. Research using primary and secondary sources
- E. Extension Activities
 - a. Listen to Charly Garcia sing "Los Dinosaurios," a song about the military junta.
<http://letras.com/charly-garcia/197557/>

Instructions for Lesson II Presidential Human Rights Abuse Policies 1983-2014

Step 1

Divide the class into groups for a collaborative research activity.

Direct students to the internet to research human rights policies created by the Argentine presidents from 1983 to 2014. Assign each group a president to research.

- Raúl Alfonsín 1983-1989
- Carlos Menem 1989-1999
- Fernando de la Rúa 1999-2001
- Néstor Kirchner 2003-2007
- Cristina Fernández de Kirchner 2011 - present

Step 2

Create a chart for the classroom wall featuring the President, dates in office, and policies related to human rights.

Note to teachers

This information will also be used for *Lesson III The Junta on Trial*.

Lesson III The Junta on Trial

- A. Materials
 - a. Internet
 - b. List of special projects and testimonials
 - c. Readings from Units I, II, III and resources in the school library
- B. Activity Sheets
 - a. Unit 4 Lesson III The Junta on Trial
- C. Suggested Readings
 - a. "Largest trial of 'Dirty War' crimes starts in Argentina. " *BBC News 28 Nov 2012.*
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-20523955>
Links to more articles about the trial.
 - b. Speck, Paula K. "The Trial of the Argentine Junta: Responsibilities and Realities"
The University of Miami Inter-American Law Review, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Spring, 1987), pp. 491-534
- D. Assessments
 - a. Activity sheet responses
 - b. Discussions
 - c. Mock trial research and participation
- E. Extension Activities
 - a. Suggested research/essay topics
 - i. Compare the Argentine Dirty War with Hitler's Nazi Germany
 - ii. Crimes against humanity and genocide trials: spotlight on Guatemala and Chile.
 - b. Read about lessons to be learned from the Dirty War
 - i. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (2011) has urged that the lessons learned from Argentina's turn from dictatorship to democracy be applied to North Africa, the Middle East and Syria.
 - ii. BBC News - Argentina's Dirty War lessons for the world
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-15736895>
 - iii. Five Lessons Bush Learned from Argentina's Dirty War and Five Lessons for the Rest of Us <http://upside-down-world.org/main/argentina-archives-32/160-five-lessons-bush-learned-from-argentinass-dirty-war-and-five-lessons-for-the-rest-of-us>
 - c. Organize a debate: Were the human rights atrocities a dirty war or genocide?

Instructions for Lesson III The Junta on Trial

Arrange a class trial in which political figures from *El Proceso* are tried for crimes against humanity. Students will use primary source documents, testimonials and newspapers. If the trial is fictionalized, students can include characters from literature and film.

Step 1

Organize the class by groups. Suggested roles for actors:

Children of the disappeared Government officials Prison guards Exiled and censored citizens Former victims Human rights representatives Historians Judge	Jury Lawyers Military of various ranks Psychiatrist Rabbis, bishop, priests Reporters/Journalists Witnesses
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Step 2

Provide class time for groups to:

- research in the library or online
- organize roles, prepare scripts, costumes and visuals

The judge should coordinate the sequence of events during the trial, monitor speed of the trial, provide introductory and concluding statements. The *Junta on Trial* is well suited for mid-term or end of the year performance based assessments.

Note to the teacher

Teachers may want to show the award-winning movie, *The Official Story*, or *Imagining Argentina* to students to help them envision Argentina during the Dirty War.

The Junta on Trial is an appropriate activity for a large class. *Unit 3 A Visit from the OAS* may be better suited for smaller classes.

Special Projects

Memoria Abierta <http://www.memoriaabierta.org.ar>

Memoria Abierta preserves, recuperates, catalogues, and diffuses the documentary collections of the human rights organizations that comprise Memoria Abierta as well as private archives related to State terrorism. At the same time, Memoria Abierta produces documentary sources and testimonies that allow for a deepening of the knowledge about the period of political violence in Argentina. (English and Spanish)

“Nunca Mas:Report of Conadep (National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons).”

Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires and Writers and Scholars International Ltd 3. Dec. 2014.

<http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/eng.html>

Site breaks down Argentine Dirty War into sections that include: The Repression, The Victims, The Judiciary during the Repression, Creation and Organization of the National Commission on the Disappeared, The Doctrine on the Disappeared, and Recommendations and Conclusions. Subsections include testimonials that correspond to the section topic. (English and Spanish)

Old Lyme to Buenos Aires: The Experiences of a Distinguished Fulbright Teacher 2013

<https://jsmanfredi.wordpress.com/resources/>

Blog by Connecticut high school teacher, and Fulbright scholar, Jeanne Manfredi. Explores efforts by various organizations to preserve Argentina's collective memory around the dictatorship from 1976-1983. Documents first hand experiences with collective memory. Includes links to articles, movies, and special projects. Excellent resource on the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo.

“Proyecto Desaparecidos” 3. Dec. 2014. Web. <http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/>

Focus on Los Desaparecidos of Argentina and contains links to background information, documents, essays, testimonials etc. on the topic. Site is in Spanish and English, contains some pictures.

<http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/eng.html>

“The Vanished Gallery” 3. Dec. 2014. Web. <http://www.yendor.com/vanished/index.html>

Focus on *Los Desaparecidos* of Argentina. Includes links to information about the victims, the people responsible for crimes against humanity, CONADEP, and human rights organizations. (English)

Prepared by Justin Campos, Branford High School, 2015

Testimonials

Barrionuevo, Alexie. Daughter of 'Dirty War' Raised by the man who killed her parents. *The New York Times*. 8 Oct 2011. Web.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/09/world/americas/argentinas-daughter-of-dirty-war-raised-by-man-who-killed-her-parents.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

After nearly ten years of incessant searching by human rights groups, DNA testing and denial, Victoria Montenegro discovers that the man she believed was her father was actually the military Colonel who murdered her parents, stole her, and illegally made her his own child. Montenegro's story about life, loss, betrayal, and trust.

Estela de Carlotto, a Guido: "Estoy sonriente todo el tiempo, por culpa tuya". *La Nación*.

www.lanacion.com.ar/1731822-estela-de-carlotto-a-guido-estoy-sonriente-todo-el-tiempo-por-culpa-tuya

Estela de Carlotto, head of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, and her grandson Guido discuss the happiness of their reunion. Spanish.

Forero, Juan. Argentina's dirty War Still Haunts Youngest Victims. *National Public Radio* 27 Feb 2010

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124125440>

Alejandro Rei discovers that he was a Dirty War orphan.

Goldman, Francisco. "Children of the Dirty War: Argentina's Stolen Orphans." *New Yorker*. 19 Mar 2012. Web.

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/03/19/children-of-the-dirty-war>.

Story of Chicha Mariani and the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo who found stolen/disappeared children of the war and returned them to their biological families/relatives.

Goñi, Uki A grandmother's 36-year hunt for the child stolen by the Argentinian junta. *The Guardian* 7 June 2015.

www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/07/grandmothers-of-plaza-de-mayo-36-year-hunt-for-stolen-child

Sims, Calvin. "Argentine Tells of Dumping 'Dirty War' Captives Into Sea." *New York Times*. 13 Mar 1995.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1995/03/13/world/argentine-tells-of-dumping-dirty-war-captives-into-sea.html>

Details and explains the "death flights," which occurred during the Dirty War, and specifically discusses the experiences of former Navy commander Adolfo Francisco Scilingo.

Sutterud, Tone. "I'm a child of Argentina's disappeared." *The Guardian*. 27 Dec 2014.

www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/dec/27/child-argentinas-disappeared-new-family-identity?CMP=fb_gu

Jorgelina Molina Planas reclaimed her lost identity at age 26. She grew up in Argentina as Carolina María Sala, named by her adoptive parents. Her biological father was shot dead and her mother disappeared in 1977.

Thompson, Wright. "While the World Watched." *ESPN*. 9 Jun. 2014. Web.

http://www.espn.go.com/espn/feature/story/_/id/11036214/while-world-watched-world-cup-brings-back-memories-argentina-dirty-war

Discusses the government's involvement in every aspect of Argentine society, specifically in the 1978 World Cup. Also provides personal stories from survivors and family members of those who were disappeared. **WARNING:** graphic details of torture.

Human Rights and Testimonial Fiction: Alicia Partnoy and the Case of Argentina's Disappeared. Web.

https://www.academia.edu/368268/Human_Rights_and_Testimonial_Fiction_Alicia_Partnoy_and_the_Case_of_Argentina_s_Disappeared

Discusses human rights and justice in Argentina. Includes testimony from Alicia Partnoy, Argentinian poet and former prisoner.

Ludden, Jennifer. Life in Argentina's 'Little School' Prison Camp. NPR. 20 May. 2013. Audio and article. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=185559556> Jennifer Ludden interviews poet and former prisoner Alicia Partnoy. Article details Partnoy's disappearance and time spent at Argentina's 'Little School' Prison Camp.

Werman, Marco. "Conflict & Justice: Uncovering the Crimes of Argentina's Junta." *PRI's The World*. 6 Jul 2012. Web/Audio (radio interview)

<http://www.pri.org/stories/2012-07-06/uncovering-crimes-argentinas-junta>

Robert Cox, editor of the Buenos Aires Herald, gives personal accounts regarding the disappeared. Also discusses the role of the Argentine military in baby theft.

"DNA used to Identify Argentina's Dirty War Orphans." *National Public Radio*. 16 Mar 2012. Audio and article.

www.npr.org/2012/03/16/148732809/-dirty-war-children-returned-to-argentine-relatives

The true identity of media mogul Ernestina Noble's children is discussed. The article also stresses the importance of DNA testing in proving adopted children to be children of the disappeared.

Prepared by Sophia Gentile, Branford High School, 2015