

University of Connecticut Early College Experience Workshop
Human Rights in the Southern Cone: The Dirty War and Marshall Meyer



Curriculum Sponsored by UConn Thomas J. Dodd Research Center
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Introduction

The workshop *Human Rights in the Southern Cone: The Dirty War and Marshall Meyer* was sponsored by The University of Connecticut Early College Experience, The Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, and El Instituto: Latino, Caribbean and Latin American Studies Institute. It explores the reign of terror that enveloped the Southern Cone of South America in the 1970's and 80's. Within the context of this Dirty War (El Proceso), it considers human rights abuses, Jewish identity, social activism, and the work of Marshall Meyer, a rabbi from Norwich, CT who dared to make a difference. *Human Rights in the Southern Cone: Spotlight on Argentina* was prepared for teachers attending the Early College Experience Workshop on December 12, 2014, and was updated in July 2015 to reflect new information and events.

Human Rights in the Southern Cone: Spotlight on Argentina introduces students to the dark period of Argentine history from 1976-1983. The military junta called this period the National Reorganization Process (*El Proceso*) and it was obsessed with eliminating "subversives." Also known as the Dirty War (*La Guerra Sucia*), this was an era of state terrorism, gross crimes against humanity, and it was infamous for *desaparecidos* (disappeared persons). People were tortured, some thrown from planes into the ocean, and babies were taken from imprisoned mothers and then given away. Justice and healing has been a long process and, in 2014, the Dirty War is still making headlines.

Human Rights in the Southern Cone: Spotlight on Argentina includes activities for students to learn about and reflect on the events leading to the 1976 military takeover, the Dirty War, and its legacy. Underlying themes threaded throughout the units include human rights abuse, freedom of speech and the press, how artists express their most important sociopolitical concerns, and how nations mourn and recover from national traumas such as the Dirty War. Student activities include: completing object-based observations of art, analyzing primary source documents, listening to protest music, reading literature, poetry and scholarly projects, participating in role play activities, researching information using online databases and writing creative and reflective essays. This curricular unit is in English, although many of the resources are also available in Spanish. For questions about *Human Rights in the Southern Cone: Spotlight on Argentina*, or access to a forthcoming website with updated activities and articles, multimedia and student work, please contact Elise Weisenbach at eweisenbach@branfordschools.org.

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