



Unit 3 The Repressed and the Repressors

Introduction

First we will kill all of the subversives; then...we will kill all of their sympathizers; then...those who remain undecided, and finally we will kill the indifferent ones. ~General Ibérico Saint-Jean, May 26, 1977

This quote by General Ibérico Saint-Jean attests to the clear and horrific plan of the junta's Process of National Reorganization (*El Proceso*) to eliminate anyone considered an enemy of the state. In contrast to Saint-Jean's clarity, the Argentines were left to wonder why people were arrested or disappeared. The media was not a reliable source of truthful information and people lived in fear of the government as well as their neighbors. In Unit 3, students will learn more about life in Argentina during this Dirty War from exiled writer Eduardo Galeano. They will learn about human rights organizations, and role-play a meeting with the OAS, government officials and prisoners.

Essential Questions Lessons I-III

- How does literature help us understand the human spirit?
- How do writers express their most important sociopolitical views?
- How does a writer's style impact our understanding of sociopolitical events?
- How can literature inspire social change?
- How can we use databases to access information?
- What is the role of human rights organizations?
- How do human rights organizations engender change?

Objectives

Students will:

- read and discuss literature by exiled writers
- research human rights organizations
- role-play a meeting with the OAS
- read a science fiction comic strip

Lesson I Century of the Wind

- A. Materials
 - a. Galeano, Eduardo. *Memory of Fire: Century of the Wind*. Norton, WWW and Co. 1998.
- B. Activity Sheets
 - a. Unit 3 Lesson 1 Century of the Wind
- C. Suggested Readings
 - a. Argentina Timeline. BBC News. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1196005.stm>
 - b. Méndez, Juan E. "Argentina." *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*. Ed. Dinah L. Shelton. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. 63-65. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. Web. 7 July 2015. URL <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX3434600032&v=2.1&u=s0143&it=r&p=GURL&sw=w&asid=210c1bfcb3861dbfb1059502a96a2647>
- D. Assessments
 - a. Activity sheet responses
 - b. Discussion

Instructions for Lesson I Century of the Wind

Eduardo Galeano chronicles the history of the Americas from Tierra del Fuego to Alaska in the trilogy *Memory of Fire*, a collection of vignettes that are often riddled with sarcasm and irony. Readings in volume three, *Century of the Wind*, teach us about the turmoil of the 20th century. Some of Galeano's messages are obvious, but often he teases us to figure out whom he is talking about, and what he is saying.

Step 1

Assign readings from *Century of the Wind*. Depending on time and size of the class, these short reading can be read by all students for homework, or they can be divided up and used as an in-class group activity. Students will complete *Unit 3 Activity Sheet I Century of the Wind* in which they analyze and synthesize the most important points of the vignettes.

- 1975: Buenos Aires- Against the Children of Evita and Marx
- 1976: Buenos Aires- The Choice
- 1976: La Plata-Bent over the Ruins, a Woman Looks
- 1976: La Perla-The Third World War
- 1977: Buenos Aires- Walsh
- 1977: Río Cuarto-The Burned Books of Walsh and other Authors are Declared Non-existent
- 1977: Buenos Aires- the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo
- 1977 Buenos Aires-Portrait of a Croupier
- 1979 Madrid- Intruders Disturb the Quiet Ingestion of the Body of God
- 1979: New York- Banker Rockefeller Congratulates Dictator Videla
- 1982: Malvinas Islands- The Malvinas War
- 1982 South Georgia Islands-Portrait of a Brave Fellow
- 1983: Buenos Aires: The Granny Detectives
- 1983: Buenos Aires: What if the Desert Were Ocean and the Earth Were Sky?

Step 2

Review student responses and evaluate how the readings have enriched student understanding of *El Proceso*. Ask students why they think Eduardo Galeano entitled this volume *Memory of Fire: Century of the Wind*.

Note to Spanish teachers

Memory of Fire is available in Spanish as *Memoria del fuego*.

Lesson II A Visit with the OAS

A. Materials

- a. Organization of American States mandate <http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/mandate/what.asp>
- b. IACHR Country Visit September, 1979
<http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/activities/countries.asp#arg1979>
- c. Activities of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Chapter II
<http://www.cidh.oas.org/annualrep/79.80eng/chap.2.htm>
- d. CIDH_Status of Human Rights Defense Agencies, Chapter XI
<http://www.cidh.org/countryrep/Argentina80eng/chap.11.htm>
- e. CIDH Conclusions and Recommendations
<http://www.cidh.org/countryrep/Argentina80eng/conclusions.htm#B.%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20Recommendations>
- f. The Inter American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)
<http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/default.asp>
- g. Proyecto Desaparecidos
 - i. <http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/>
 - ii. <http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/tort/marina/rolon/eng.html>
- h. The Legacy Project. <http://www.thelegacyproject.com/index.html>
- i. The Vanished <http://www.yendor.com/vanished/index.html>

B. Activity Sheets

- a. Unit 3 Lesson II A Visit with the OAS

C. Suggested Movies http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Films_depicting_Latin_American_military_dictatorships

<i>Funny Little Dirty War</i> (1983)	<i>Kamchatka</i> (2002)
<i>The Official Story</i> (1985)	<i>The Blonds</i> (2003)
<i>The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo</i> (1985)	<i>Imagining Argentina</i> (2003)
<i>Night of the Pencils</i> (1986)	<i>El Nüremberg Argentino</i> (2004)
<i>The Girlfriend</i> (1988)	<i>Captive</i> (2005)
<i>Verónico Cruz</i> (1988)	<i>Hermanas</i> (2005)
<i>Buenos Aires Vice Versa</i> (1996)	<i>Chronicle of an Escape</i> (2006)
<i>Angel Face</i> (1998)	<i>Complici del Silenzio</i> (2009)
<i>Olympic Garage</i> (1999)	<i>Te Extraño</i> (2010)
<i>The Lost Steps</i> (2001)	<i>Clandestine Childhood</i> (2011)

D. Suggested Readings

- a. Cardenas, Sonia. *Human Rights in Latin America: A Politics of Terror and Hope*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

E. Assessments

- a. Activity sheet responses
- b. Discussions
- c. Group work
- d. Research
- e. Role-play

F. Extension Activities

- a. Watch a scene from *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez in which the OAS visits one of the Mirabel sisters in prison.
- b. Read *In the Time of the Butterflies*, Part III Chapter Eleven: Maria Teresa, March to August 1960.

Instructions for Lesson II A Visit with the OAS

In September of 1979, the Organization of American States conducted its first on-site visit to Argentina. It was the 11th such visit to Latin America since the initial investigation of the Trujillo regime in the Dominican Republic in 1961. In this activity, students will learn about the OAS by researching and role-playing an *in loco* investigation of claims against the government. This activity can be fictionalized or students can maintain the integrity of the actual documents.

Step 1

Direct students to access information on the internet about the Organization of American States (OAS) and other human rights organizations. Next, students will complete the activity sheet *Unit 3 Activity Sheet II A Visit with the OAS*.

Step 2

Divide the class into the following groups:

- Group 1- prisoners
- Group 2 family members of the disappeared
- Group 3- members of the OAS investigating committee
- Group 4- government personnel

Step 3

Direct students to begin research by:

- reviewing the OAS investigation report
- using databases of information about victims and their repressors. Databases include lists of victims by categories such as children, pregnant women, different occupations, religions, etc.
- using the library, online newspapers and articles for additional information

If enacted as historical fiction, students can include information gleaned from literary readings and movies such as *The Official Story* or *Imagining Argentina* (see above for listings). In *The Little School*, Alicia Partnoy gives a first hand account of her disappearance, daily life in the prison facility and the guards. She also discusses her release and exile.

Step 4

Arrange time for students to meet in groups to plan the content of the roleplay. Suggest costumes and visuals for effect.

Step 5

After the presentation, review the research process, question the level of empathy that rollplay may have encouraged.

Note to the teacher

Warning: many descriptions are explicit and may warrant pre-selection

Lesson III *El Eternauta*

- A. Materials
 - a. *Dan Dare Pilot of the Future* <http://www.dandare.info/artists/lopez.htm>
 - b. *Graffitimundo* <http://graffitimundo.com/new-art/el-nestornauta/>
 - c. *Words without Borders* <http://wordswithoutborders.org/graphic-lit/the-eternonaut>
- B. Activity Sheets
 - a. Unit 3 Lesson III *El Eternauta*
- C. Suggested Readings
 - a. Ferreira, Rachel Haywood. "Mas Alla, El Eternauta, and the dawn of the golden age of Latin American science fiction (1953-59)." *Extrapolation* 51.2 (2010): 281+. *Literature Resource Center*. Web. 7 July 2015.
 - b. Hite, Katherine. *Politics and the Art of Commemoration: Memorials to Struggle in Latin America and Spain*, London; New York: Rutledge, 2012. See Chapter 5, The Globality of Art and Memory Making: The Bicis of Fernando Traverso, for information about the Montoneros, subversive terrorist and the guerrilla movement in Argentina in the 1960's-70's.
- D. Suggested Video
 - a. *The Eternauta's Wife*.
Interview with Elsa Sánchez the wife of "El Eternauta" Héctor Oesterheld. She survived Héctor's disappearance and the murder of their four daughters: Beatriz, Estela, Diana y Marina. Spanish/English <https://www.kanopy.com/product/eternautas-wife>
- E. Assessments
 - a. Activity sheet responses
 - b. Discussion
 - c. Essay
- F. Extension Activities
 - a. Revisit *El Eternauta* in *Unit 4 Lesson II: Presidential Human Rights Abuse Policies 1983-2014*. Meet *Nestornauta*, a stenciled art figure created to pay homage to former President Nestor Kirchner.
 - b. Research the Montoneros (Movimiento Peronista Montonero-MPM), leftist urban guerrilla and subversive terrorist group in Argentina during the 1960s.

Instructions for Lesson III *El Eternauta*

El Eternauta, a combination of eternity and astronaut, is a science fiction comic book series by Héctor Germán Oesterheld. The first version (1957-1959) is about a nuclear attack by aliens on the earth. *El Eternauta II*, published in 1976, reflects the socio political climate early in *El Proceso* and is critical of the junta. Oesterheld himself appears in the comic. *El Eternauta* is a story of people surviving catastrophe by working together, a story of the collective hero. Oesterheld, and his daughters were all members of the Montoneros guerrilla group, and all disappeared.

Step 1

Initiate a discussion about collective heroism and the role of comic books/graphic novels. Brainstorm a list of comic book heroes such as Batman, Captain America, Nightwing, The Green Arrow, and The Flash. What is their importance in our culture?

Step 2

Direct students to read about Héctor Germán Oesterheld and artist collaborator Francisco Solano López. Students will take notes about events in their lives and note their sociopolitical ideas. In a creative writing assignment, they will combine this information with information they have learned about Argentina during *El Proceso*.

Step 3

Distribute writing prompt *Unit 3 Activity Sheet III El Eternauta*.

In this assignment, as Francisco Solano López, you will write a letter to Héctor Germán Oesterheld. Explain to him why you left Argentina and express your concerns for his safety. Your letter should reflect what you know about the political situation under the junta, and what is rumored to be happening in Argentina. The pressure is on, the OAS and other human rights agencies are watching Argentina closely. Discuss Oesterheld's ideals and activities, tell him about other exiles, and plead with him to take care.

Learn more about the creators of *El Eternauta* Héctor Germán Oesterheld and artist collaborator Francisco Solano López at Graffitimundo <http://graffitimundo.com/new-art/el-nestornauta/>
Words without Borders <http://wordswithoutborders.org/graphic-lit/the-eternonaut> and Dan Dare Pilot of the Future <http://www.dandare.info/artists/lopez.htm>

Step 4

Conclude the activity by discussing the role of comic books in the 1950's- 1980's. Open a conversation about what would be a typical vehicle for spreading information today among young people (Twitter, social media, YouTube etc.) Would this technology have altered the events of the Dirty War or people's awareness of the Dirty War? Consider that although information travels faster in 2014, situations such as the 43 missing students in Guerrero, Mexico remind us that human rights atrocities are ongoing.

Note to the teacher

El Eternauta is available in Spanish. Second series (1976) is available in English.