



CARLOS JÁUREGUI: THE UNFORGETTABLE FAG



STUDY GUIDE

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About Argentina

Argentina is a country in the southern part of the continent of South America. It is the eighth-largest country in the world, and the second largest in South America, after Brazil. It is bordered by Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay, and the Atlantic Ocean. Argentina is divided into 23 provinces and one autonomous city. The autonomous city is named Buenos Aires, and is also the capital of Argentina. One of Argentina's provinces is also named Buenos Aires. Carlos Jáuregui was born in this province in 1957, in its capital city, La Plata.

The population of Argentina is approximately 45 million. More than 97 percent of the people are European—primarily of Italian and Spanish descent—and mestizo (European and Amerindian).¹ More than 90 percent of the population is urban, and about a third lives in and around the city of Buenos Aires. The national language of Argentina is Spanish, and about four-fifths of the population is Roman Catholic, however the majority are not practicing Roman Catholics. Argentina's government is a federal republic. The nation of Argentina has many natural resources and at one time it was one of the wealthiest countries in the world, however Argentina has also struggled with economic crises and recessions.

Former Military Dictatorship

Argentina has also been through a number of periods of political instability. One of the most well-known began in 1976 when the military overthrew Argentina's government and established a dictatorship. The period of violence that followed is referred to as the "dirty war." During that time, suspected dissidents were victims of state-sponsored torture and terrorism, and an estimated 30,000 people were killed. It was not until 1983 that Argentina's military dictatorship finally fell, and was replaced by a democratic government.

Those years under the dictatorship impacted the course of the gay rights movement in Argentina in a number of ways. One was that Argentina's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community was so violently treated that it finally began to push back. The mistreatment of the LGBT community continued even after the dictatorship fell. For instance, in 1984 police arrested 200 gay men in a Buenos Aires bar called Balvanera. In 1984, following those arrests, the Comunidad Homosexual Argentina (CHA) was founded when the gay community decided that something needed to be done to stop this mistreatment. Carlos Jáuregui became CHA's first president.

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/attachments/summaries/AR-summary.pdf>

Human Rights

Another way the dictatorship impacted the gay rights movement was that as Argentina transitioned into a democracy, there was a strong focus on human rights. Argentines wanted to establish human rights protections in order to prevent future abuses like those that had previously been allowed to occur. Many gay rights activists—including members of CHA—took advantage of the focus on human rights, and framed gay rights as a human rights issue so that it could also receive that support.

After the human rights violations of the 1970s and early 1980s, Argentines believed that human rights protection was so important that the country made some changes to its constitution in order to better protect those rights in the future. The changes were adopted in 1994. In addition, under the 1994 constitutional changes, the city of Buenos Aires became an autonomous city, meaning that it would have an autonomous system of government similar to the 23 provinces. That autonomy included the ability to make its own laws. This was when Jáuregui drafted what became Article 11 of the Statute of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, which prohibited discrimination against people on the basis of their gender identity or sexual orientation. Article 11 did not pass until after his death.

About HIV and AIDS

Jáuregui died in the city of Buenos Aires in 1996, due to complications from Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). AIDS is due to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), a virus that weakens a person's immune system so that he or she has trouble fighting off infection and disease. It is spread through certain bodily fluids. HIV can lead to AIDS, which is where the immune system is badly damaged and is unable to fight off infection.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic began in the 1980s. Since it was first observed among gay men, it was initially believed that only gay men could get it, however researchers soon discovered that this was not the case. In the beginning, large numbers of people died from AIDS because there was no effective treatment. In 1987, azidothymidine (AZT)—also called zidovudine—was introduced to treat the disease, with some success. In 1997, researchers finally discovered a therapy called highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), which was extremely effective, and dramatically reduced AIDS deaths.² There is still no cure for HIV, but it can be controlled with medical care.

LGBT Rights in Argentina

Today, Argentina is seen by many people as a world leader in LGBT rights. Homosexuality has been legal there since 1887. In 2010, Argentina became the first country in Latin America, and the tenth country in the world, to legalize same-sex marriage. Argentina

² <https://ccr.cancer.gov/news/landmarks/article/first-aids-drugs>

also has some of the world's most progressive transgender rights. Under the 2012 Gender Identity law, Argentines can change their gender identity on government documents without permission from a doctor or transition surgery, as many other countries require.

Annual pride celebrations, including parades, take place in Argentina, as in many other countries. The world's first Gay Pride march is believed to have taken place in 1970 in New York City.³ Buenos Aires' first Pride march took place in 1992, led by Carlos Jáuregui. The Buenos Aires march is held every year in November, in order to commemorate the founding of Argentina's first gay association, Nuestro Mundo, which was founded in 1967.

However, while there is a lot to celebrate about LGBT rights in Argentina, critics also point out that much remains to be done. Unfortunately, discrimination and violence against members of the LGBT community is still common in Argentina.⁴



³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gay-Pride>

⁴ <https://www.thebubble.com/in-honor-of-world-pride-day-a-look-at-lgbtq-rights-in-argentina>

Glossary

- **1976 coup:** In 1976, Argentina's military overthrew the government and established a dictatorship which lasted until 1983.
- **Raúl Alfonsín:** Alfonsín was democratically elected as president of Argentina in 1983, after years of rule by military dictatorship.
- **AZT:** AZT, or azidothymidine—also called zidovudine—is an antiretroviral medication used to treat HIV. Before it was approved in 1987, there was no effective treatment for HIV, and AZT was seen as a breakthrough drug.
- **Buenos Aires:** Buenos Aires is one of 23 provinces in the country of Argentina. It is also the name of Argentina's capital city.
- **Comunidad Homosexual Argentina (CHA):** This gay rights group was created in 1984, and still exists.
- **Falklands War:** Fought in 1982, this short war was between Argentina and Great Britain, who fought for control over the Falkland Islands.
- **Gay Liberation Front:** A gay liberation group formed in New York City in 1969.
- **Gay Pride:** Gay Pride celebrates the equality, dignity, and pride of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.
- **Gays DC:** Gays por los Derechos Civiles, also known as Gays DC, was a gay rights group established in 1991.
- **Huésped Foundation:** Since 1989, the Fundación Huésped, or the Huésped Foundation has been working to fight AIDS in Argentina.
- **HIV:** Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus spread through certain bodily fluids. It weakens a person's immune system so that he or she has trouble fighting off infection and disease. There is no cure for HIV, but it can be controlled with medical care.
- **La Plata:** The capital of the province of Buenos Aires.
- **homophobia:** Fear or prejudice towards homosexuality.
- **LTGBI:** LTGBI stands for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex.

- **François Mitterrand:** Mitterrand was president of France from 1981 to 1995.
- **Alejandro Modarelli:** Modarelli is a writer and one of the founders of gay rights group, Gays por los Derechos Civiles, also known as Gays DC.
- **National University of La Plata:** This university is located in the city of La Plata, which is the capital of the province of Buenos Aires.
- **nunciature:** A position of tenure in the Roman Catholic Church.
- **Proust:** Marcel Proust was a French novelist and critic.
- **Monsignor Antonio Quarracino:** Quarracino was archbishop of Buenos Aires until his death in 1998.
- **Radical Civil Union (UCR):** The UCR is a center-left political party whose candidate, Raúl Alfonsín was democratically elected as president in 1983, after years of rule by military dictatorship.
- **secondary school:** A secondary school is a school for students after elementary age, and before college. In the United States it is usually known as a high school.
- **World Health Organization (WHO):** The World Health Organization is an agency of the United Nations, and works to improve public health around the world. WHO maintains a list of diseases, which is called the “International Classification of Diseases.” Homosexuality was originally included in the list, as a disease. It was removed in 1990, when an undated version of the list was released.

Additional Resources

Books

- Javier Corrales and Mario Pecheny, eds. (2010). *The Politics of Sexuality in Latin America: A Reader on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Jordi Díez (2015). *The Politics of Gay Marriage in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, and Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Omar Guillermo (2016). *Out in the Periphery: Latin America's Gay Rights Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/on-how-argentina-became-a-trailblazer-in-lgbt-rights/>
- Anna-Catherine Brigida (June 6, 2018). "Latin America Has Become an Unlikely Leader in LGBT Rights," *Quartz*. <https://qz.com/1288320/despite-its-catholic-roots-latin-america-has-become-an-unlikely-lgbt-rights/>
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<https://www.britannica.com/place/Argentina>
- Omar G. Encarnación (February 2018). "A Latin American Puzzle: Gay Rights Landscapes in Argentina and Brazil," *Human Rights Quarterly*.
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