

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910814630203321
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Titolo	Impunity, human rights, and democracy : Chile and Argentina, 1990-2005 // Thomas C. Wright
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Austin : , : University of Texas Press, , 2014
ISBN	0-292-75927-4
Edizione	[First edition.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (207 p.)
Disciplina	364.1/310982
Soggetti	Impunity - Chile Human rights - Chile Democracy - Chile Impunity - Argentina Human rights - Argentina Democracy - Argentina
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	""Contents""; ""Acknowledgments""; ""Acronyms""; ""Introduction""; ""1. State Terrorism in the Southern Cone""; ""2. The Construction of Impunity""; ""3. Human Rights Advocacy""; ""4. The Changing Legal Environment, Domestic and International""; ""5. Precipitating Events""; ""6. The Eclipse of Impunity""; ""Conclusion""; ""Notes""; ""Selected Bibliography""; ""Index""
Sommario/riassunto	Universal human rights standards were adopted in 1948, but in the 1970s and 1980s, violent dictatorships in Argentina and Chile flagrantly defied the new protocols. Chilean general Augusto Pinochet and the Argentine military employed state terrorism in their quest to eradicate Marxism and other forms of "subversion." Pinochet constructed an iron shield of impunity for himself and the military in Chile, while in Argentina, military pressure resulted in laws preventing prosecution for past human rights violations. When democracy was reestablished in both countries by 1990, justice for crimes against humanity seemed beyond reach. Thomas C. Wright examines how persistent advocacy by domestic and international human rights groups, evolving legal environments, unanticipated events that

impacted public opinion, and eventual changes in military leadership led to a situation unique in the world—the stripping of impunity not only from a select number of commanders of the repression but from all those involved in state terrorism in Chile and Argentina. This has resulted in trials conducted by national courts, without United Nations or executive branch direction, in which hundreds of former repressors have been convicted and many more are indicted or undergoing trial. Impunity, Human Rights, and Democracy draws on extensive research, including interviews, to trace the erosion and collapse of the former repressors' impunity—a triumph for human rights advocates that has begun to inspire authorities in other Latin American countries, including Peru, Uruguay, Brazil, and Guatemala, to investigate past human rights violations and prosecute their perpetrators.
