For decades now, Argentina has received international attention for horrendous crimes committed under its last military dictatorship. The regime waged a “dirty war” against its citizens from 1976 to 1983 and abducted 500 Argentine children after murdering their mothers. Forty years before the Dirty War in Argentina even began, Spain was being torn apart by a brutal, ideological civil war that ended in 1939 with an authoritarian regime under General Francisco Franco. A flood of allegations in the last decade has revealed that during the civil war, throughout Franco’s dictatorship, and even into the early years of Spanish democracy, as many as 300,000 children were systematically abducted from their mothers. These children were illegally adopted by supporters of the regime or stripped of their identities and sent to institutions run by the state or Church. Though organizations have formed to publicize these stories and lobby the government, there has been relatively little discussion on the topic on a national scale. Internationally, these human rights abuses within Spain are largely unknown. Since the transition to democracy more than 35 years ago, both political and cultural reconciliation have been limited. Through a political lens, this project aims to analyze and explain the
failures in Spanish democracy as well as contribute to the growing body of literature regarding transitional justice and its responses to similar human rights abuses.