Welcome to our second Newsletter!

With the Spring semester racing to its conclusion, I would like to take the opportunity to share with all our majors the distinctions and awards that have been established to honor International Studies majors who distinguish themselves in special ways. A long-standing way of recognizing graduating seniors with excellent academic records is Departmental Honors. To qualify for Departmental Honors in International Studies, students must have an average of B+ or better in courses taken for the major, as well as a grade of at least A– on the senior thesis. Last year two new prizes were established to recognize students who exhibit an exemplary level of engagement in social justice issues. The INS Exemplary Student Engagement Award is now given annually both to an undergraduate (at the Academic Awards Reception, held this year on Wednesday, April 13) and to a graduating senior (at the Honors/Baccalaureate Ceremony, taking place on May 20). This year an additional graduating senior award has been instituted to honor a particularly excellent senior thesis — the Ken Pittman Senior Thesis Prize. The recipient of this award will also be announced at the Honors/Baccalaureate Ceremony. Below you can read about the very special person after whom this prize is named.

The Ken Pittman Senior Thesis Prize

This award is named after a charismatic and much loved faculty member who died tragically of an aneurism in 1999. Ken Pittman was born in North Carolina, attended Duke University, and received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Yale University. He came to Manhattanville in the mid-80’s and taught a variety of courses in international politics and in his specialty of Latin American politics.

When he was not teaching, Ken spent all the time he could in Mexico, usually in Amacuzac, a rural village in Morelos county, where he built a second home and which became the base for his ongoing research on the effects on the Mexican peasantry of the emerging phenomenon of globalization.

Ken eventually married Carolina Rodriguez, a Mexican woman from Amacuzac, and after they came back to the States, Carolina became an important part of our Manhattanville community – completing an undergraduate and graduate degree here, teaching Spanish and working in the Academic Advising Office. Ken and Carolina have a daughter, Kenia, known and loved by many at Manhattanville, who is currently studying art at FIT.

Ken was very involved with the International Studies Program. He headed it for several years and taught the INS Senior Seminar. His strong engagement on the INS Committee helped implement a set of important revisions to the major in the early 90’s.

Ken loved words and had an unusual gift for expressing himself both orally and in writing. He appreciated clarity of thought and strength of conviction, but he was also aware of the need for fine distinctions and subtlety. He was an advocate for an unpretentious language that reflected a basic love of humanity and a concern for social justice, expressed both in the content and in the tone of the writing. Humor was always a feature of Ken’s writing, a necessary companion to the sharpness of his wit and the seriousness of the subject matter. In Ken’s writing and talks, it was his gentle humor that won over the members of his audience, bringing the topic close to them and making even rather radical ideas seem unthreatening.

The Ken Pittman Senior Thesis Prize will be awarded to a graduating senior whose thesis illustrates Ken’s values of commitment to humane ideas expressed in excellent writing.
WHO ARE WE?

The INS Faculty Committee is comprised of:

Gabriele Wickert (Director, German/INS)
Kendra White/Sierra Decrosta (student reps)
George Castellanos (Spanish/Latin American Studies)
Irene Whelan (History/Irish Studies)
Greg Swedberg (History/Latin American Studies)
Robert Derrell (Econ/Fin/Mgt)
James Bryan (Econ/Fin/Mgt)
David Borker (Econ/Fin/Mgt)
Mohamed Mbodj (History/African Studies)
Binita Mehta (French)
Beth Williford (Sociology/Women’s Studies)
Wil Tyrell (World Religions)
Peter Bell (INS/Sociology)

[The INS Faculty Committee usually meets once a semester to review the program and to address specific concerns. If you have concerns that you would like to bring to the attention of the Committee, please be in contact with one of the student reps listed above or the director. If you wish to retain anonymity, you can also slip a note under Prof. Wickert’s office door (Lib. 210)]

Remember: All majors must have an advisor from the International Studies Committee.

WHAT HAVE THE FACULTY BEEN UP TO LATELY?

Professor Binita Mehta (INS Committee member and head of the French Department) is presenting a paper in early April at the North-East Modern Language Association (NEMLA) Conference on “The Indian Diasporic Indenture Novel: An Example of Transnational Literature”. Professor Mehta is also responsible for an annual Spring French Film Festival here at the College. This year’s festival, which runs on four successive Thursdays at 7pm from March 24 to April 14, is on Religious Diversity in France. [The film schedule is printed separately in this newsletter.] Finally, Professor Mehta has been involved with a special “Global/Experiential Task Force” (as have Professors Wickert, Whelan and Cherry), which will shortly make recommendations to the Provost regarding new initiatives and structuring to better meet the goals of global-experiential learning at Manhattanville.

Professor Peter Bell (INS Committee member and teacher of “Intro to Global Studies” and “INS Senior Seminar”) organized a session on Feminist-Marxism: Theory and Practice for the Left Forum Conference that took place in NYC from March 18-20. (He himself presented on The Theory of and Struggle against Capitalist Patriarchy, while our own senior Janelle Little presented her thesis on Is the Zapatista Movement Feminist?) Over the semester break Professor Bell was in Thailand, continuing his ongoing work there, work which is currently focusing on the Red Shirt movement and its challenge to the existing class structure. Professor Bell also continues to work with the Mount Vernon School District on curriculum development and providing teacher training in global history and economics.

In mid-March, at the Eastern Economic Association Conference in NYC, Professor James Bryan (INS Committee and Professor of Economics) joined senior Economics major Sarah Lamarche Castillo in presenting their joint paper on Politics, the Preservation of Natural Resource Wealth, and the Funding of a Basic Income Guarantee. This paper has also been accepted for publication in an edited collection entitled Exporting the Alaska Model. The Basic Income Guarantee policy is one of numerous public policies examined in Professor Bryan’s course on “Public Finance”, usually offered in fall semesters.

In January Professor Lawson Bowling (INS Committee, Professor of History, and former director of the INS Program) traveled to Brazil for the second time with INS alumnus Marcellus Miglioranzi. Brazil has a personal connection for Professor Bowling since members of his family emigrated there, and it also is featured in a number of his courses. In Fall ’11 Professor Bowling will be teaching “Topics in the History of Business”, which has a global perspective and is available as an elective to INS students.

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The INS Program would like to congratulate Professor Kwan Ha Yim for a professional life-time of service to Manhattanville College, to the Political Science Department and to the International Studies Program.

Professor Yim, who holds a Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University, came to the College in 1964 and has been teaching courses in his specialty of International Politics and International Law. Professor Yim has a distinguished record of scholarly publications on China and Chinese-American relations, as well as on the two Koreas, Japanese-Korean relations and the South Korean dissident movements.

The International Studies Program owes Professor Yim a special debt of gratitude, since it was he who developed the proposal for an interdisciplinary INS major that was submitted to and approved by the State Education Department in Albany in the mid 1970’s. Professor Yim has always been very involved with the INS Program – teaching required courses and electives like International Politics, International Law, Model UN, War and Human Rights and The Search for Peace, and serving on the INS Committee for many years. Students appreciate him as a soft-spoken, but extremely knowledgeable teacher of great integrity, who really cares about his students. Since Professor Yim will be retiring in a few years, students are encouraged to take his classes before it is too late. We thank you, Professor Yim, for all you have given Manhattanville and the INS Program!
Our Current Students

Our INS students have proven themselves as both budding scholars and dedicated activists. Attendance and Presentation of Papers at Conferences are the academic community’s established way of sharing insights, and in the case of the following two students, it also entailed a call to action for creating a more just world.

Valerie Valdez — In February Valerie attended the Human Development Conference at Notre Dame and presented her thesis on Income Inequality in China. She says that the experience of sharing ideas about global development issues with students and faculty from all over the US was tremendously enriching.

Janelle Little — Senior Janelle recently presented her thesis — Is the Zapatista Movement Feminist? — at the annual Left Forum Conference in New York City. [The panel at which she presented was organized by Professor Bell, who himself spoke on The Theory of and Struggle against Capitalist Patriarchy. A number of Mville INS majors, including Cheryl Woolf, Rachel Townsend and Agbogo Kalu, attended the Conference.]

Study Abroad continues to be one of the most appealing ways for Mville INS majors to combine their global learning with real world experiences.

Christa Calbos — Senior Christa returned from a Fall 2010 semester in South Africa and admits that it was a life-changing experience. [See her article in another section of this Newsletter]

Ismarie Fernandez — Junior Ismarie is spending the Spring 2011 semester in South Africa. Her emails suggest that her experiences there are both exciting and deeply moving.

We want to congratulate the following INS students who were recently approved for study abroad next year:

Nicole Mele – Sp. ’12 in Montpellier, France
Fatoumata Bah – Sp ’12 in South Africa
Julia Casazza – Fa ’11 in Barcelona, Spain
Cristal Espejo – Sp ’12 in Buenos Aires, Argentina
Alina Fisher – Fa ’11 in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Our students are also engaged in Other Activities that reflect their independent thinking and their willingness to go above and beyond the normal requirements for the major. Here are some examples:

Rachel Townsend has been running the weekly trips to the UN organized by the Duchesne Center

Alina Fisher has been TAing in Prof. Bell’s Intro to Global Studies class

Megan Angley, Kendra White and Christa Calbos have been doing an independent study with Prof. Bell on Global Feminism

Megan Angley continues her pivotal involvement with Manhattanville’s Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW)
A number of Mville INS majors are involved in Internships this semester. We urge all students to do at least one internship as part of their studies. The INS concentrations in Global Justice and International Management actually require such an internship, but internships benefit students of all concentrations, helping them to see the application of international studies to concrete, real-life settings, while also often benefitting their career opportunities.

Cheryl Woolf did a very rewarding internship that fuelled her progressive ideas. Here’s what she says: “This semester I helped coordinate an annual conference in New York City called the Left Forum and this year's theme was "Towards a Politics of Solidarity."

Charlene Cordero-Matos is interning at the 92nd St. Y in NYC. “My work at the International Relations Department of the 92nd Street Y has taught me that large institutions do care about the cultural and religious background of the international organizations with which they conduct business.”

Emelda Ogweta, who is completing the internship required of her Global Justice concentration, has the following to say: “I intern for March of Dimes, an international NGO organization that helps moms have full-term pregnancies and researches the problems that threaten the health of babies all over the world. I am currently working on a newsletter for my internship which is pretty cool and fun. I also learned fun ways to raise money towards an organization that you are passionate about.”

Sierra Decrosta, whose concentration is in Global Culture, is interning at Bond Street Theatre, a humanitarian, not-for-profit group that works to create innovative theater that is relevant and accessible to diverse audiences all over the world. She is currently doing research for their upcoming Afghanistan trip and helping them to develop a new show called intersection.

Our current Juniors are working to identify their senior thesis topics and to refine them into viable thesis assertions or questions. Here are their topics to date:

Ismarie Fernandez: Sources of Income and Rural-Urban Migration in South Africa

Christa Calbos: Masculinities in South Africa

Kendra White: The Impact of Neo-Liberal Structure Adjustment Policies on Women

Mina Popovic: The Refugee Problem in Tanzania

Megan Angley: Gender Biases in Diagnosis and Treatment of Diseases in Africa

Lauren Marini: The Migration Problem in Italy
Aniella Fignon, along with students Candice Alcantara, Megan Angley, Hawi Debelo, Monique Hardy, and Fatu Magiraga, and Duchesne advisor Tenisha Swift, traveled to Ethiopia over the Winter Break to work at Kingdom Vision International Orphanage.

During the first two weeks of January 2011, leader Tenisha Swift, five others and myself headed to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to volunteer at Kingdom Vision International (KVI) orphanage. A small facility, it usually shelters its capacity of 77 children. The children at the orphanage varied in age; the youngest were infants and the oldest were in their early teens and attending school. Each of them had a bright smile that stretched from ear to ear.

Each of us had been recruited by the Duchesne Center through its Service Learning Trip program, which sends students to various destinations within our nation and across the globe to volunteer each break. The six of us designed programs for the children to participate in. I planned an arts-and-crafts course that included various projects; junior and INS major Megan Angley brought traditional American dance-along songs; junior Fatu Magiraga brought card games; and the other girls designed similar fun projects for the orphanage. None of us had any idea how excited and incredulous the children would be when we implemented our programs. Upon our first real visit to the orphanage, the kids clambered around us, reaching for the boxes of chalk and beads we carried. When we finally distributed the materials, they eagerly grabbed what they could and began to draw on the ground and string together bracelets and necklaces. They all begged us to draw “makena!” which we quickly came to realize meant “car.” During their jewelry-making sessions, the children picked out right colored or letter beads. When they had finished their masterpieces, they proudly held our hands and walked us over to view each creation. During the dance sessions we began to hold at the beginning of each morning, we would dance our hearts out to songs like “The Time Warp” and “Peanut Butter Jelly Time.” The kids each put their own twist on the dances as they learned the moves.

I found that the moments during which I had the most fun and that I felt were the most rewarding, however, were when the children attempted to give back to us. Some of the children at KVI had bonded more closely with one of us students in particular. One, “Mebrate,” began clinging to me the moment we walked into the orphanage. One day, while making bracelets, she attempted to give me the one she was making. It was the greatest gift; a child whose face I had been trying to put a smile on had put a smile on mine. Working in an orphanage was an intense, emotional experience, but those moments made every second worth it.

In addition to working with the children, we spent time touring Ethiopia. The majority of our trip was spent in Addis Ababa, where we participated in cultural experiences that none of us had foreseen. We pushed our way through crowds to get onto taxi buses, walked the streets of a third world city and ate some of the most delicious food I’ve ever tried: injera. On our weekends, we attempted to see a little more of the country than just its capital. We traveled south to Awassa and Nazaret, where we were able to relax and enjoy the beauty of Ethiopian nature. During our rides back and forth between the cities and the capital, we saw what most Westerners picture when we imagine what Africa is like: huts lined the sides of bumpy roads and animals ran free. We looked out across the never-ending plains; some areas were dense with trees, other areas were completely bare. But everywhere we looked had one thing in common: it was beautiful. In Awassa, we were able to travel to the top of mountain and overlook the lakes of the city, as well as tour on a boat, during which we were able to see pelicans swimming in the same water as boys and people washing their clothes on the edge of the lake.

The trip was incredible, and one I wouldn’t trade for anything. Both working at KVI and touring Ethiopia were experiences I will never forget.
Manhattanville International Studies Program

Study Abroad

Junior Christa Calbos traveled to South Africa for an SIT program. Here she writes about her experiences.

My Semester in South Africa with SIT
By Christa Calbos ‘12

After staring at the blinking cursor on this page for far too long I consider giving up and deeming my experience studying abroad in South Africa as indescribable, inexpressible...completely impossible to communicate. How does one, after all, measure an experience that has left an indelible mark on your soul? However, I know that I am not the first, that many have travelled to South Africa before me, perhaps feeling about it the very same way. Just before I surrender to the overwhelming nature of the task, I consider the words of South Africa’s beloved liberation leader Nelson Mandela: “There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered.” My semester abroad during the fall of 2010 has changed me in ways I am still processing, ways I have still yet to discover. So what exactly, I ask myself, changed me so much?

Like any good International Studies student I arrived in South Africa ready to think critically and analytically about everything I encountered. What a surprise it was to discover that the one thing I would truly be analyzing was myself, and the lens through which I view the world. I would of course learn about the beautiful country of South Africa along the way, but this was simply the tool used for introspection, self-reflection, self-criticism, and growth. During my five months in country focused on “Multiculturalism and Human Rights” I lived with four different host families (of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds), inhabited various hostels, and shared an apartment with other students while conducting independent research. It did not dawn on the majority of us sixteen students that we were learning about history from those who had shaped it. Our jaws dropped in awe on the first day of classes as we learned about affirmative action policies from a man who had spent ten years in prison discussing his vision for the new South Africa with Nelson Mandela himself.

I spent the first three months taking in all that South Africa had to offer and lamenting over the fact that I could only choose one topic to research. In a country whose history is so recent and alive it seems to seep from the very pores of every surface, everything seems important—everything seems urgent. I quickly came to find though, that I was not there to change South Africa, or even challenge what I might find “wrong.” I was in South Africa to challenge myself, to constantly consider what informs my opinions and beliefs. I learned from the many incredible South Africans I met (most of whom had personally experienced violence and oppression during the struggle for liberation) that justice and reconciliation is not only about how we can challenge a political or economic structure, but how we can also challenge the ways in which we think.

It was this stripping of ones preconceptions and the development of self-awareness that allowed me to find meaning in my time in South Africa particularly in my research. Whether I was helping my host “mama” cook “mealie pap” in the tiny rural village of Tshabo, learning about the process of wine-making with my Afrikaner family in Stellenbosch, or watching the sunset as I listened to the nearby mosque chant the call to prayer in the Muslim quarter of Bo Kaap, I could not help but feel transformed by a country that had, and is continually, transforming itself.

Sidenote: I would urge all INS students looking for an “alternative” study abroad experience to consider School for International Training (SIT) programs. For more info ask Fr. Tyrrell for a course catalogue or visit www.SIT.edu!
AFS 2019: Intro to African Studies I [African Studies]
AFS 2080: Ancient African History [African Studies/Global Culture]
AFS 3098: Africa in World Politics [African Studies/ Int’l Poli-Eco Relations]
*ANTH 1050: Cultural Anthropology [Global Culture]
ANTH 3025: Global Health [Global Culture/ Global Justice]
ARH 2025: History of African Art [Global Culture]
ASN 2026: Japanese Popular Culture [Asian Studies/ Global Culture]
ASN 2033: Hist of Traditional China [Asian Studies]
ASN 2034: Religions of India [Asian Studies/ Global Culture]
ASN 3011: Seminar on Buddhism [Asian Studies]
CSCH 3013: Social Theory thru the Arts [Global Culture/Global Justice]
CSCH 3211: Gendercide [Global Justice]
**ECO 3017: Int’l Finance and Global Economy [Int’l Pol-Econ Relations/ Int’l Mgt]
ENG 2058: Int’l Literature [Global Culture]
FRN 2005: French Cinema [European Studies/ Global Culture]
GER 3009: Politics + Art of German Cinema [European Studies/Global Culture]
*HIS 1021: History of the Caribbean [Latin-American Studies]
*HIS 1025: Indigenous + Colonial LA [Latin-American Studies]
HIS 2030: Italy since 1800 [European Studies]
HIS 2 ———: History of Modern Egypt [Global Culture/ African Studies]
HIS 2052: Russian History to 1917 [European Studies]
HIS 2067: History of Traditional China [Asian Studies]
HIS 3003: The 20th Century [Int’l Pol-Econ Relations]
HIS 3037: Immigrant Experience in America [Global Culture]
HIS 3083: Women, Imperialism + Islam [Global Culture/Global Justice]
HIS 3116: Topics in the History of Business [Int’l Mgt/ Int’l Pol-Econ Relations]
HIS 3135: Europeans/Americans thru African Eyes [African Studies/Global Justice]
HIS 3126: Europe and its Empires [European Studies]
PHL 2027: Crime and Punishment [Global Justice]
POS 2011: Comparative Politics [Int’l Poli-Econ Relations]
POS 2042: Model UN [Int’l-Poli-Econ Relations]
POS 3007: Religion and Politics [Global Culture/ Global Justice]
POS 3012: Environmental Politics [Int’l Pol-Econ Relations/Global Justice]
POS 3081: Public Policy of Sci + Tech [Global Culture]
**PSY 4015: Topics in Cultural Psychology [Global Culture]
SOC 2000: Environmental Sociology [Global Justice]
SOC 2021: Race + Ethnicity [Global Culture/Global Justice]
SOC 2028: Sociology of NYC [Global Culture]
SOC 2079: Collective Memory + Holocaust [Global Justice]
SOC 3000: Latin American Social Movements [Latin American Studies/ Global Justice]
SOC 3055: Media and Social Change [Global Culture/Global Justice]
SOC 3056: Music and Society [Global Culture]
*WREL 1014: World Religions [Global Culture]
WREL 3095: Race, Religion + Culture [Global Justice]
*WST 1040: Women in Society [Global Culture/Global Justice]
Throughout this unit on post colonial Africa, we encountered many women who struggled through periods of development and modernization in their respective countries in an attempt to find not only themselves, but a place to fit in in their society. The films “The Battle of Algiers” and “Faat Kiné”, along with the novels Nervous Conditions and Changes, A Love Story, are four works that embody their struggles.

The four works, as different as they may appear at first glance, also have undeniable similarities. Upon viewing “The Battle of Algiers”, directed by Gillo Pontecorvo, one notices that there is not exactly a main protagonist. One might also notice that women are not prevalent in the film. However, there occurs a scene in the movie in which three Algerian women from the casbah don French fashions in an effort to blend into the French sector of town and plant bombs. This is an extreme statement on the part of the women of Algeria. In their fight for independence, these three women were willing to sacrifice not only their traditional dress and moral values, but their very lives in order to contribute to and ensure the freedom of their people. The film fails to mention much else about the role of women in the fight for Algerian independence, but it is clear that they took a stand for the greater good.

The next work, Nervous Conditions by Tsitsi Dangarembga, is extremely different in perspective. The entire novel focuses on women in Zimbabwe and their ongoing struggle to adapt within conflicting states of modernization and tradition. The protagonist, Tambu, is a member of a family who lives on close to nothing and cherishes traditional values such as educating the males of the family and making sure the females are fit for housewifery.

On the other hand, she has an uncle who is extremely educated and successful, who influences her life and that of her family a great deal. We see through her eyes the struggles she goes through being a young girl in an African society: she wants to go to school and be educated like her uncle and older brother had been, yet she does not want to lose her ties to her culture, which is the only thing she has ever known. Tambu sees the effect the English language has had on her cousins, from whom their native language and traditions had escaped. She also must deal with the death of her only brother, which leaves her mother in a state of numbness and disbelief when Tambu herself finally receives an opportunity to study and thereby leave the homestead.

Next is Ama Ata Aidoo’s novel Changes, A Love Story. This novel also comes from a rather different perspective, being set in Ghana in the 1990’s in a much more urban area than Zimbabwe. This novel arguably gives the most panoramic view of the plight of women in post colonial Africa. The focus is on three couples, all of which include a woman struggling for personal freedom and self realization. There is Esi, who is married to Oko, a husband who would prefer that his wife pay more attention to her marital and motherly duties than her work. Esi refuses to give in to his demands, preferring to attach herself to her work, which she feels makes her an important and relevant part of society. Oko reaches his breaking point and indulges in the act of “marital rape”, for which Esi ultimately decides to leave and divorce him. This in a way makes her the strongest of the three women, because divorce is something that happened quite rarely in Ghanian society, especially at the request of a woman.

Then there is Esi’s closest friend Opokuya, who struggles for rights in her own marriage with Kubi. They often fight over who will win use of their only car, a fight which Opokuya often loses. She is not nearly as radical as her friend, reacting in a shocked manner when told of Esi’s impending divorce. She is, in a sense, a more traditional woman, but one who longs for more freedoms in her marriage and in society.

Finally there is Fusena, not as much of a main character, but important nonetheless. She is the current wife of Ali, the man that Esi falls in love with following her divorce. Fusena was on the track of a great education and wanted to be a teacher, but at the request of her husband, she instead left school to be a housewife and mother. It is easy to see that she regrets this decision when Ali brings home Esi as a prospective second wife, a woman who has a full education. Finally there is the film “Faat Kine”, directed by Ousmane Sembene, which exemplifies the most recent and drastic female struggle for personal realization. After two pregnancies out of wedlock, the protagonist Faat Kiné has earned a place for herself as a successful gas station owner in patriarchal Senegalese society, raising her two children alone and providing fully for their needs. In the course of the film she must deal with her past, while at the same time managing the current reality that her children are growing up in.
Neoliberalism and the Fate of Argentina

This research essay was written by ALINA FISHER ‘13 for her Freshman Seminar on Violence in Latin America

The rise of neoliberalism in Latin America during the 1970s was directly connected to important changes in the global economy and international power relations. Many Latin American nations were in debt due to the failure of previous economic policies and corruption, which led these nations to request loans from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In order to insure repayment of its debt, the IMF obligated Latin America to follow neoliberal policies, which entailed freeing markets, reducing the role of the state through privatization, reducing government spending, and lowering trade barriers. The state instituted neoliberal economic policies at a time of social and economic inequality, ensuring that the political system continued to be dominated by the rich and powerful at the expense of the majority. Particularly in Argentina, the result was a social, economical, and political crisis, which led to state-sponsored violence. Democracy could not coexist with neoliberal policies because the working class would not and did not vote for candidates perceived as undermining their economic status. Therefore, neoliberalism necessitated brutal dictatorships in Argentina to enforce an economic policy that undermined the interests of the working class.

During the first decades of the 1900s Argentina did not have the capital to become industrialized and to compete in the world market. Its economy was based primarily on producing exports. Therefore, Argentina took on foreign loans to develop its local economy, and adopted the Import Substitution Industrialization system (ISI). During the 1950s and 1960s, Argentina’s economy grew with the massive state investments, but which required loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, by the 1970s, Argentina entered into an economic crisis which led to the default of the foreign debt. In consequence, the IMF forced Argentina to follow neoliberal policies because they argued it was the only way for it to repay its debt. These policies were “adopted to decrease the government’s expenses and increase its profits by privatizing companies, cutting the national budget, introducing massive foreign investments, and allowing free trade.” Although the policies increased the countries’ profits, they did not benefit the working class. Instead, the state’s implementation of neoliberalism has led to growing inequality, class polarization, and social conflicts throughout Latin American societies.

Military forces supported many Latin American governments to maintain order and repress opposition to rising unemployment, wage reductions, and price increase. Neoliberalism has come to be considered an elitist project that is often associated with the support of authoritarian political rule. In Argentina, the massive popular opposition led to the period known as the Argentinean Dirty War (1976-1983). The military, which had grown weary of what they viewed to be weak and inept civilian leaders who could not adopt the necessary economic reforms, seized power. Democracy was undermined by neoliberal policies as Argentina continued to be ruled by dictatorships needed to control the uprising working class and pay the country’s foreign debt. This period was characterized by 8 years of violent rule, with about 30,000 citizens killed, tortured and “disappeared.”

In addition to the violence of this regime, the military restored and even expanded neoliberal economic policies. “One of the first acts of the Argentine military dictatorship during the dirty war was to ban unions, suppress their opposition to the implementation of neo-liberal economic policies, such as privatization of public resources and cutting federal spending on social services.” In its attempt to control its citizens, the military regime was producing a brutal state-sponsored violence, while transforming Argentina’s economy into a new one that would undermine the lower-classes, while pleasing foreign investors and local elites.

The military used the “shock doctrine,” a theory established by Naomi Klein, who explained that “The Shock Doctrine is the gripping story of how America’s “free market” policies have come to dominate the world- through the exploitation of disaster-shocked people and countries.” Klein tries to explain that for a third-world country to adopt a dramatically new economy which undermines the lower-classes, it needs to go through a crisis that would shock its citizens into a paralyzed and submissive state. In Argentina, the dirty war was the perfect constructed crisis to shock people and paralyze them while Argentina’s economy was being shaped. However, the extreme violence led to strong social movements which caught the attention of the international community. Finally in 1983, the military junta had to step away from power.

After the horrendous regime of the Dirty War, it was almost impossible for another military dictator to take power because Argentina was now under the international community’s watchful eyes. This time, neoliberal policies had to be reinforced under repressive “democratic” presidents. Even though the era of dictatorships was over in Argentina, the new presidents had to continue with the neoliberal policies because the foreign debt had to be repaid to the IMF. In consequence, during the 1990s, the democratically elected Argentinean governments failed to provide welfare to its citi-
zens and the prices of products were too high. This period was the worst in Argentine economic history and was considered a crisis of neoliberalism and corruption.\(^{10}\) This crisis led to four years of economic and political instability in Argentina. In the year 2001, Argentina had three different presidents. These presidents had to resign from office because they were not able to control the inflation and the economic crisis which brought social unrest and riots. Argentineans knew it was time for a change.

Finally in 2003, Nestor Kirchner would transform Argentina’s economy. He questioned the IMF and tried to negotiate the reduction of the debt and the expansion of the repayment period because he knew that more neoliberal adjustments would only have a worse effect on Argentina. However, the IMF was not accepting Kirchner’s proposals.\(^{11}\) Taking this fact into consideration, one can question the legitimacy of the IMF, because if they are supposed to help Latin America, then why do they keep insisting on establishing those same policies that were clearly harming them? After so many years of lending money and watching the negative outcomes of the foreign debt, the IMF has not changed its policies. Therefore, it is argued that the purpose of the IMF policies is not to facilitate the development of Latin America, as they claim on their official web page. Moreover, since agents of the IMF oversee the indebted Latin American countries to ensure that they are complying with their strategies; they are aware of the extreme poverty that these policies have created in these countries.

Finally, due to the international concern about Argentina’s situation, the IMF gave the country a time extension and a reduction of the total debt.\(^{12}\) Moreover, Kirchner turned Argentina’s economy in a direction opposite from neoliberalism. He extended the state’s control over the economy in his attempt to stabilize the economy and raised the world prices for Argentina’s farm-commodity exports, leading to an economic boom. This proved that neoliberalism was the cause of Argentina’s economic decline, because its economy only improved when its economical policies were restructured. Neoliberalism’s failure to deliver high rates of economic expansion, its part in creating extensive popular unrest and social inequality, has caused the decline of neoliberal economic ideas in the region since the 1990s.\(^{13}\) This paved the way for the 21st century socialism system in Latin America. Nestor Kirchner implemented this system in Argentina, and it is still continued today by his wife Cristina Kirchner.\(^{14}\) The system consists of nationalizing companies, greater state involvement in the economy, and more governmental investment in social welfare. With this socialist approach, the economy might not be as productive as it was with neoliberalism, because the government has more expenditure, but it provides enough goods for everyone to be able to satisfy their needs and state-sponsored violence is no longer being practiced.

Neoliberalism had deep and profound consequences in Argentina. Only after a prolonged cycle of violence was the state able to implement these policies which turned out to be extremely exploitative. Neoliberalism necessitated brutal dictatorships in Argentina to enforce an economic policy that undermined the interests of the working class. This resulted in major social unrest which affected not only Argentinean society, but the economic and political sphere as well. This instability locked Argentina into a pattern of poverty and violence. However, 21st century socialism has alleviated Argentina’s crisis and the foreign debt left by neoliberalism. Argentina is still underdeveloped, but it has attained a greater social equality and political stability due to 21st century socialism.

End Notes

6 Ibid.,
11 Ibid.,
14 Ibid.
This year’s annual Left Forum, entitled “Towards a Politics of Solidarity,” was held over the weekend of March 18-20th at Pace University in New York City and featured an array of progressive leftist academics, activists, students and organizations. The topics of panels available at the conference ranged from “Hillbilly Nationalists, Revolutionary Greasers, and Black Power: Organizing Poor Whites in the New Left,” to “Capitalism and Education: A Marxist discourse on what we’re fighting against and what we’re fighting for.” A number of our very own INS majors were able to attend this enlightening event as spectators to innovative radical political thinking and participants in various workshops providing examples of effective forms of activism. Two of our very own seniors participated at the conference -- Cheryl Woolf, who worked as an intern in organizing it, and Janelle Little, who spoke about the Zapatista Movement as one of the panelists at the session: “Feminist Marxism in Theory and Practice.” This panel was organized by Professor Peter Bell, who explained the infusion of Marxist theory and feminism into the class struggle under capitalist patriarchy. The reference to the link between feminism and capitalist economic systems that encourage suppression came from the prestigious eco-feminist author Maria Mies, who seemed to have influenced the entire eclectic panel.

Understanding the origins of violence against women and the feminization of poverty helps build a basis for creating positive changes that will affect social and cultural developments in the future. Professor Bell narrowed down the origins of structured violence against women and the view of them as commodities to colonialism, housewifization and the witch hunts. Identifying these key developments allows for a clearer understanding of the degradation of women throughout history -- in slavery to their colonial master, and as modern slaves to the home as housewives. According to Professor Bell, all three were designed to keep women economically, socially and politically below men and institute a continuing cycle of control and exploitation over them. This brought Professor Bell’s argument back to Marxist theory in terms of what defines value, since value has been determined by men and thus belies a masculine bias. However, what the man values are things in nature necessary for survival, like water and food, so there is a constant struggle by man to control nature. As a result of man trying to conquer the limitless bounds of nature, he inherently looks to dominate women, the creators of life, as another form of control over nature. The connection Professor Bell made here was very interesting in opening a new outlook on how women are viewed and treated as a whole around the globe. The necessity for solidarity to unify gender and class is one that will take time through education of both men and women to redefine value, denaturalize labor, and work to change oppressive social and cultural attitudes.
On March 9th, Professor Emma Dowling came to Manhattanville to give a talk on Anti-Globalization Movements and the Struggle against Austerity. Her lecture was arranged by Professor Bell and was co-sponsored by the International Studies Program and the Sociology Department.

In her talk Professor Dowling, who teaches at Queen Mary College, University of London, and who has also been active in the global justice movement, explained that neo-liberalism is the structural adjustment that came with globalization and the rise of financial capital. Neoliberal policies entail government cuts in social welfare, privatization of public companies, and free trade. Professor Dowling explained that during the post Cold War period, there was only one way to do things: “the way of the west”, also known as capitalism. However, during the 1990s, these neoliberal policies triggered social movements that challenged this idea of “no other way.” These social movements extended everywhere, from metropolitan cities in developed countries to indigenous communities in developing countries.

Professor Dowling included some examples such as the Mexican Zapatistas, who rose up to defend their lands and way of life from the government that was trying to expropriate them. Their movement was triggered by the North America Free Trade Association (NAFTA), which clearly exemplifies global free trade and its downsides. She stated that the peak of these social movements was in 1999, after a massive protest took place in Seattle against the meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the organization responsible for imposing free trade. This protest was significant because it was not just a single group, but many united social groups, such as feminists and environmentalists. A new social movement came from this protest and different ideas and tactics were shared between the different groups. After Seattle, protests all over the world became commonplace. Some rose up against the European Union, against the IMF, the World Bank, etc. Anti-globalization movements increased in number and intensity but many believed that there should be a more substantial forum where these movements could gather and express their ideas globally. As Professor Dowling explained, this made the world social forum possible. It was created in opposition to the world economic forum, to contest and plot against globalization. It met for the first time in Brazil in 2001. It is open for everyone, and NGO representatives, activists, and social movements from all over the world have been meeting periodically for seminars and workshops.

With the financial crisis of 2008, however, the anti-globalization movement itself went into a crisis. The absence of organization and budget cuts adversely affected the movement. Was it the end of the movement? Or did the financial crisis in fact signal the end of neoliberalism? Professor Dowling suggested that what really happened was another stage of disaster capitalism. Massive cuts in health care and education, higher tuition, reduced pensions, longer labor hours and the closure of libraries, for example, marked a new age of austerity. Neoliberalism had become stronger with the financial crisis. Dowling explained this phenomenon based on Naomi Klein’s book The Shock Doctrine: that the government shocks its citizens with fear in order to control and oppress them and to prevent people from protesting against its policies. One way to shock them is by introducing cuts in social welfare. People do not know where to turn. This led in the UK to a new turn against the government, one organized by students and faculty unions against raising tuition.

Living in England permitted Professor Dowling to witness these demonstrations; students even occupied the headquarters of the parliament in London, smashing windows and fighting back the police. She argued such actions raised the issue of legitimacy, of civil disobedience and direct action, and whether breaking windows, fighting back the police, and occupying buildings were really a crime. Often such actions were the only way protesters could gain space and change something. She gave the example of the British activist Emmeline Pankhurst, who belonged to a feminist group involved in property damage, and who stated: “We do not come here as law breakers, but as law makers. We are not breaking any laws because the laws already imposed by the government are created to protect rich people only, so they do not apply to us. They are not our laws.”

Professor Dowling encouraged students to not feel hopeless, because the success of the protests indicates that change is possible. Social movements make changes possible. Now universities across the UK, USA, and many other countries have been occupied. In these occupations, huge meetings to defend education and ways to transform it have taken place. She concluded that protests do not bring change overnight, but they do eventually create changes. It gets to a point when enough is enough. People must fight for their rights and for a fair world; they need to struggle together to bring change and create a collective consciousness. I believe that with Professor’s Dowling talk and example, Manhattanville students should feel encouraged and empowered. British students and other professors like Professor Dowling have protested against the damaging policies of the government and are still struggling to bring change in Britain. Therefore, this shows us that we are able to achieve something and that we should protest and fight against these governmental cuts that are affecting us and the global community as a whole. These cuts in education and social welfare will bring greater economic and social problems. We all should have the right to education, health and public services, and we cannot let the government deprive us of such rights.
ALUMN UPDATE

Ana Nadal de Jesus ’10 is still working at IDL in Washington, D.C., but has applied to Johns Hopkins SAIS. She had her interview recently, so we are all crossing our fingers for her!

Jacqueline Bourgeois ’08 continues to work for Morgan Stanley in their Legal and Compliance Division, where she was recently promoted to Manager. (Congratulations, Jackie!) Jackie is also applying to law schools within the NYC area. She has been very helpful in mentoring a number of our INS majors nearing graduation. Thank you, Jackie, for your networking efforts!

Eliza Sanchez Lomakina ’10 is still working hard as a Relationship Associate for Citibank in Santa Domingo. She has also started work on her MBA at Florida International University in Santa Domingo, so she is very busy indeed! We wish her well in both endeavors.

Gabriel Mejia ’08 is working in graduate admissions as NYU’s Stern School of Business, where he also recently started a Ph.D. program in Political Science, focusing on International Relations. This is exciting news and we all wish him well!

Upcoming Events

April 7, 7:00 PM: French Film Series [Religious Diversity in France] — “La Fille du RER (The Girl in the Train)” — Brownson 8

April 13, 4:00 PM: Academic Awards Reception [Includes announcement of INS “Exemplary Student Engagement Award”] — West Room

April 14, 7:00 PM: International Studies Forum (Required for International Studies Majors)—The agenda features “The Role of Women in the Current Middle East Uprisings” by Dr. Cynthia Metcalf; a presentation by junior Christa Calbos on her study abroad in South Africa, and much more!

April 21, 8:00 AM—1:30 PM: UN Briefing on Challenges and Opportunities for Preventing Non-Communicable Diseases (Transportation provided)

Many thanks to Aniella Fignon for her invaluable help in putting this newsletter together!

Gabriele Wickert