

Education for Memory and the Continuing Struggle for Justice and Human Rights in Argentina



Wendi Adelson
(’01), Coral Springs, Florida

The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo - Linea Fundadora

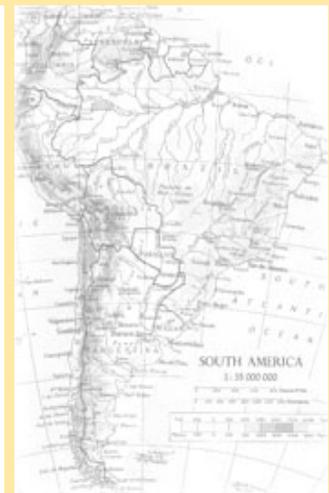
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Project Goals

- To learn how the struggle for justice continues more than twenty years after the latest Argentine military dictatorship
- To learn about the political environment in which 30,000 people were "disappeared"
- To interview the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo to understand what motivates them to continue their struggle

Personal Goals

- To understand my perspective as a North American white, Jewish woman while embracing an Argentine vantage point through total immersion in language and culture
- To learn about the effectiveness of women by working with a grassroots organization based on the unifying theme of motherhood



Activities

- Compiled a 'memory book' of newspaper announcements
- Marched with the mothers every Thursday at the Plaza de Mayo
- Translated the mothers' responses from all over the world for support
- Translated documents and pamphlets about eliminating Third World Debt for the Dialogue 2000 Project of SERPAJ (Peace and Justice Service) headed by Nobel Prize Winner Adolfo Perez Esquivel
- Worked with SERPAJ-sponsored camp for abused and orphaned children

Key Dilemmas

- When, if ever, is a policy of 'no reconciliation' and 'no forgetting' counterproductive to a budding democracy?
- What is the meaning of 'justice' and how can justice be meaningfully achieved when President Menem pardoned all military officials?
- Is economic reparation an achievement of justice or a kind of economic prostitution?

Important Learnings

- Grief positively focused on eliminating injustice can fuel an entire movement
- The more I was willing to give, to risk, to love, to overcome fears and insecurities, the richer and more successful were my experiences