We were there!! And it was Superlative!!!

1. Longest mountain chain in the world (Andes)
2. Widest street in the world (El Nuevo de Julio) in Buenos Aires
3. Widest waterfall in the world (Iguazu Falls in Iguazu Argentina)
4. Driest desert in the world (Southern Peru near Parracuas)
5. Highest navigable lake in the world (Titicaca in Peru)
6. Highest vineyard in the world
7. Tallest capital building in the U.S. (Austin, TX)
8. For many of us the mostest (a new word??) flights in one trip (17 airflights from beginning to end)

Thursday, July 1, 2004 by Darlene Voeltz AUSTIN

The Fulbright Scholars arrived in Austin TX on July 1 for a 2-day, 3-night orientation. We had great individual accommodations at the Double Tree Hotel. After 15 of the 16 arrived (one missed a plane connection), we had a buffet dinner and drinks together. Then 7 of us took cabs to the Congress Street Bridge downtown at dusk to watch approximately 1.5 million bats come out from under the bridge to do their night feeding. It was incredible as their bodies shadowed the skies between us and the full moon.

After leaving that very incredulous site, we walked back the 2 miles via the state capitol where the rotunda was still open. What a majestic building, taking over 100 years to be built to its current stature, boasting the tallest capital in the U.S. There in the rotunda staring at us was George W. He is the most recent former governor of Texas, and when the current governor leaves office, each of the former governors’ pictures will be moved one spot to the left, all the way up and around the floors, ascending to the picture of the first governor of Texas.

Friday, July 2 - Saturday July 3

We arrived at the Lozano Institute for Latin American Studies at the University of Texas, and learned the history of the Fulbright-Hays Scholarship program. Senator Fulbright wanted local input from countries, so in 50 countries there are commissions to help and to select local participants. There have been over ¼ million grants given, and there is participation from 140 countries. Monies come from the participating countries, with $130 million coming from U.S. tax dollars, and this is distributed among the 140 countries. Example: If Argentina contributes, their students can come to the United States, but the U.S. people can go to all 140 countries. There are teacher exchange grants, graduate student grants, Fulbright Scholar grants, and faculty seminar abroad grants.

Here we had history, literature, music, archaeological, and cultural lectures from professors and grad school students in the LILAS program. The detail we learned assimilates to being a quick study course of Peruvian and Argentine history/culture, and when we left we felt we had a base for understanding the sites/cultures we were about to experience. Of significance to us as teachers was to learn that in Peru, teaching is of low status, and, in fact, the teachers of Peru are set to go on a countrywide strike on July 14. In the past some of these strikes have actually shut down the infrastructure of the nation and have led to violence. We shall see what lies ahead!!

PERU

Peru is one of the five countries (Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru) in Latin America with significant indigenous populations, with Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru being the heart of the Incan Empire. Current growth rate in Peru is 4-5 percent with no inflation in sight. There is some investment coming in; there is a worrisome national debt. Current economic performance is better than Argentina. Peru used to be the jewel of South America, and although it may never recapture that spot, it has potential for luster as the mountain areas provide possibility for abundant hydroelectric power. Tourism is a way for the poor people of Peru to get alternative employment; yet in a way, it often exploits them.

Peruvians have been criticized for not fully protecting their ruins; however, it must be noted that ruins are everywhere here. A mere dig in the sand at many points may find artifacts right below the surface. Ancient societies in Peru were matrilineal. Women were rulers of the world of peace. Men got jealous and invented warfare!!

There are 26 - 27 million people in Peru, with 1/3 living in Lima. On July 14 there is a national strike scheduled which may shut down the entire country. Previous to 1980, the military had strong influence on elections. Since 1980 Peru has been a democracy and has great success in holding elections. In fact, if a Peruvian citizen does not vote in an election, they are fined and their identity card is taken from them.

Democracy prevails, but people do still need jobs and the poverty/inequality among sections of Peru is dramatic. The sections are the highlands, the coast, and the jungle area. The current president is Toledo, and he is not doing very well. Toledo was born to a very poor family of 12-15 children in the highlands.
His wife is very outspoken and a detriment to the political structure. Current polls indicate Toledo has less 7-8 percent popularity; and in fact, one of the items on the agenda of the pending strike is to overthrow his government. The blue collar workers, as well as the SUTEP Labor Union (radical teachers union) are totally dismayed by his failure to follow through on pay raises and other promises made during his election campaign. During the last week of June some people were killed as a result of the teachers’ disgruntlement.

Previous to Toledo was Fujimori and Garcia. Garcia was disastrous to the economy of Peru. In 1985 during Garcia’s time, The Shining Path, a radical group, practiced violence and caused many difficulties; they were terrorists. There are lots of homeless and orphans due to terrorism of the 80s. The economy was driven into the ground, with an inflation rate of 7600 percent by 1990. Inflation rate on department store credit cards for one month reached 75 percent. There were no prices on restaurant menus because there was hourly inflation. In 1990 Garcia's administration left. The country had lost 25 percent of its GNP.

Fujimori then took over in 1990 as president. His parents were from Japan. The economy was in shambles, and he needed to get rid of The Shining Path who were revolutionists against economic and social structure. He was successful; within 2-3 years inflation was down to 2-3 percent. The leader of The Shining Path is still imprisoned in Lima. In 1992 a self coup seized power and rewrote the constitution.

Fujimori was reelected in 1995 but became less liked as he began to blackmail people and become authoritarian. He ran again in 2000 since it was only his second term under the NEW constitution, but he was very much disliked and corrupt and later escaped to Japan where he still held citizenship. Peru is still trying to extradite him to face charges for deeds and misdemeanors and for the millions of dollars he took with him. It is rumored that Garcia will run again in 2006. Peruvians talk a lot about politics, and while many hate Toledo, they do not want the return of Garcia either.

ARGENTINA

Argentina was at one time known as one of the leading countries, of the world. In 1928 it boasted 80 percent of the U.S. GDP, but today has a dismal 10 percent ($3,786) in comparison to the U.S. ($38,620), but is still the highest in Latin America. They have failed to develop new technological products and to develop a predictable economic and political structure.

A name synonymous with Argentina is Juan Peron, the leader of the Peronist party, a military leader, and President of the country with three landslide elections. He was a populist and not a dictator. He led a military coup against mistreatment of the workers, making a tie between military and unions. In fact there is now a national holiday on October 17 to recognize him. He spoke the language of the workers. 'Descamisados' = took off his coat and spoke in his shirtsleeves to be more like them.

Peron used the powers of taxation to gain monies from agricultural exports in favor of subsidies for industrialization. GDP grew from $8.206 in 1930 to $10,257 in 1940 to $16,532 in 1955. In 1948 the railroad nationalization took place, removing the British control of the RR. Argentina was becoming stronger through industrialization, but Peron overstaffed with his friends, and hyperinflation moved in during the 70s and 80s. This became his legacy. Spurts of growth were followed by huge declines and thus unrest in the government. Peron fell from power in 1955 because of a military coup. He was ex-communicated and went into exile in Spain. His wife, Evita, died in 1952 and had been a link with the lower class of Argentina due to her rise from poverty.

1955-73. De-Peronization did not succeed. In 1973 he was brought back to save the nation, but he died a few months later and his 3rd wife, Isabel, took over. She turned to Jose Rega, and he funneled part of the budget to a gang of military who assassinated Peron leftovers who said unkind words about Peron. There were a series of assassinations that turned into the Dirty War -- groups of 8/10 people who assassinate others. The inflation rate skyrocketed to 600 percent in 1976 and there was much political violence. This led to the perfect scenario for another coup to overthrow the government and the military did just that.

There were now great abuses of power. People disappeared in fights of urban terrorism. This was the END of Peronism and of populism. President Carter even got involved and withheld supplies and cut off military assistance, criticizing Argentina for human rights abuses. Later President Regan stopped all this criticism and praised Argentina for its fight against Communism.
The mid-80s (post-Dirty War) found Argentina in a state of democratic chaos. It was bankrupt and indebted with hyperinflation, and by the end of the 90s Argentina had the highest debt per capita in the world, equaling 15 percent of the IMF debt.

There are many protests in Argentina, numbering about 130 per month. There are 5 types: 1) puebladas (town protests), 2) piquetes (road blocks), 3) cacerolazos (pot/pan banging), 4) asambleas populares (neighborhood protests), and 5) escraches (graffiti protests.) Some positive achievements include labor programs and a fight against corrupt politicians.

**Sunday, July 4 by Darlene Voeltz**

We had a free morning --many walked around in Austin, and some of us hiked through Barton Creek Park. It is incredibly huge and beautiful, especially noting that it is in the center of town; yet while hiking in the park one feels like it’s in the middle of the country. A couple of people even went for a swim in the river.

**Monday, July 5 by Darlene Voeltz Lima**

After a very long flight, we arrived in Lima, Peru, just after midnight, thus July 5. After going through customs, we noticed there were loads of people waiting at the airport carrying signs with people’s names so the people flying in knew who was there to pick them up. Sure enough, one of them said FULBRIGHT. We loaded our luggage onto the bus, and we were off. We arrived at the Hotel Sol de Oro shortly before 2 a.m., exhausted yet excited. We received our room assignments and were pleasantly surprised by a welcoming package in the room -- Peruvian shoulder bags, itineraries, and chocolates!! We quickly collapsed on our beds to get some rest. In the morning we had a lovely buffet breakfast at the hotel, received a generous per diem allowance, and attended an introductory welcome session with the Peruvian Fulbright Commission where we each shared our project proposals:

Michelle will study the agriculture, including ancient practices and politics. She is planning a spring trip with her International Travel Study agricultural class to Argentina.

Kate will study the Latin American economic development, focusing on sustainable growth.

Brenna will study use of the land - historical to present. What is the land used for? What is being done to preserve the land, and what impact does land have on the environment?

Anne will study the history of the people, products produced, and tourism (its impact on culture).

Janet will study the culture and lifestyles of teenagers -- their music, education, interests in entertainment, magazines, and books.

Clive will study comparative politics, transitional systems, and Latin American politics.

Cindy will study the indigenous people, their myths/legends, and the total physical response of story telling.

Janelle will gather materials for her school’s international month when students study festivals, conduct cultural style shows, and present crafts, music, etc. of the country they are studying.

Bob will study the indigenous people, including emphasis on 5 areas: 1) Children, 2) Community, 3) Nature, 4) Elders, and 5) Spirituality

Jeanne will study humanities. She is focusing on Art as Cultural Identity in three parts: women and the arts, colonial, and contemporary. Textiles will be a major focus.

Darlene will study eco-tourism and its effect on GDP. Are eco-tourism sites preserving their site/culture? Where do park admissions go -- do they sustain the necessary programs and maintenance of the site?

Arifeen will study the economics and political problems. He will look at the role of the IMF and of the
country’s fiscal policy.

Kathleen will gather information to help advise students who apply for Fulbright Scholarships and to integrate Fulbright Scholars into the curriculum at her college.

Julia works with ESL students and wants to gain experiences to help her bridge the gap between Peruvian and Argentine students as they mainstream into American education. She will gather materials for Boxes of Reality where students can share their commonalities.

Sharmon will gather materials for an artifacts box for cultural projects, including objects/pamphlets on food, clothing, textiles, festivals, customs, government, education, music, art, and religion.

George endeavors to locate choral music which reflects the cultures of the people, particularly looking at the language within the music, and bring this back to his college choirs.

After the sharing of the projects we were treated to an exquisite lunch, with an introduction to Peruvian Inca Kola. The afternoon included a city tour through Miraflores and other sections of the city, complete with bumper to bumper 5 lanes of traffic each way. We noticed how clean the city is, with basically no litter even in the poorer areas. There has been no rain here since January 18, 1970, only daily drizzle (especially every winter day) and 98 percent humidity. Therefore, streets and buildings are not prepared for rain. The roofs are not waterproof. We had been warned we would not see the sun in Lima, and truly that is correct. However, the flowers are beautiful, with varieties and colors of every hue. Of particular note is the hibiscus. People are dressed in western wear. Buildings are very colorful, with many hues of yellow, orange, blue, etc., but are not real bright colors like in Mexico or Africa. No buildings are over 34 stories tall, due to earthquake possibilities—the largest quake was in 1974. There are 20 newspapers and 14 cable TV stations in the city. People must be 18 to drive.

Peru gained its independence on July 28, 1821 from Spain. In 1879 they lost the war against Chile and relinquished the northern part of Peru to the victor. There are 1600 miles of shoreline in Peru. The life expectancy is 72 for women and 69 for men. There is a 10 percent income tax for those making less than 2,000 soles per month (about $600), and 11.7 percent for those above 2,000 soles. Gasoline ranges from $2.70 - $3.20/gal. The exchange rate currently is $1 = 3.4 soles.

The guide pointed out the electric cables on some of the buildings; these were a remnant of the terrorism of the 80s. He also noted that there are about 1160 births per day and 450 deaths. Infant mortality rate is 43 of 1000. A recent Adopt-a-Balcony program is trying to restore many of the balconies destroyed by the earthquakes. There is no building in Lima over 33 stories tall due to earthquakes.

Voting in Peru is mandatory. If a citizen does not vote in an election, he/she is fined $34. They must vote if they are between the ages of 18 and 70. They can’t even cash a check if they do not vote, as their identity card will be lacking the necessary stamp. Elections are always on Sundays.

We visited Santo Domingo Square, stopping by to peek at churches, cathedrals, the post office (where kiosk vending spaces lining the outer walls are inherited spaces), and even the catacombs under the Convent built in the 17th Century and used until 1821 to protect themselves from pirates from England and France. Pigeons abound in the square and are dubbed the Rats of the Air. Small children and other street vendors beg for coins and in exchange offer gum, candy, etc.

There are private and public schools, with a cost of $7 for public school for the parents association, which they can work off by painting, cleaning, etc. Illiteracy rate is 11 percent. A public school teacher makes $170/180 per month; teachers are not among the respected professions. Students must test to get into the University. Typically 39,000 test for 3,300 spots. A lawyer or engineer makes $450. Priests, engineers, policemen and the army are more respected than teachers. Fifty-four percent of Peruvians live in poverty, with 19.4 percent in extreme poverty. Other problems in Peru are lack of education and corruption. Gasoline sells for $2.70/$3.20 per gallon for 84 octane.
Exports are fishmeal, tuna, blue jeans, clothes, beer, Inca Cola, white onions, coffee, wood, avocado, mango, bananas, and grapes.

We noticed American franchises as we drove along: McDonalds, Dominos Pizza, Pizza Hut, Papa Johns, Chiles, Starbucks, TGI Fridays.

The city tour was appreciated by all; our Fulbright experience had officially begun.

**Tuesday, July 6 by Cynthia Hoetzer**

We drove south out of the city on the highway – to the west you can see the Pacific Ocean and to the east the slums of Lima. The further out we drove, the poorer the housing seemed to become until eventually there were just very small huts on large, sandy hillsides. We were told that the owners of this land have planted trees to prevent the expansion of the squatters who set up house here. After about half an hour driving, we came upon a wetland to the west, a park or nature preserve of some kind where there were many different birds. We turned into this area and followed a road back in to an area far removed from the highway, passing a golf course before coming to the site of Cambridge College – a private school where instruction is given in English.

This is an international school – kindergarten through 5th form. There is no middle school system so students go K-6 and then 1-5, which is like our 7-12. Donald Jones, the headmaster, met us and he and the lower school principal (a woman) showed us around. To me, the school had a very CA feeling in that the rooms were open to the outdoors; students eat outside on picnic tables (with cloth napkins and real glasses!). Kids were milling around, as it was snack time. They wear uniforms, which consist of gray pants, plaid skirts, and blue sweaters. This private school costs $450 (pesos I think, but am not sure) a month or $4800 a year plus an entry fee of $3000 for the lower school and $4000 for the upper school. There are 850 students K-5. School is from 8:20 AM - 2:50 PM with an after school session for dance, sports, music, and theater. We were shown classrooms (though we did not go in), the gym, a gymnastics center, music rooms, science labs, computer labs, & karate and dance studios. Classes are 40 min. long; foreign language classes (other than English) meet twice a week. School is in session Aug.-Dec. and Mar. – July. Each teacher teaches 5-6 classes a day. E-mail address for the headmaster is spence@camcol.edu.peru

In the teachers’ room there was a sign that said:

2 teach is  2 touch lives  4 ever

There were lots of flowers planted all over the campus (bougainvillea, geraniums, and hibiscus) and the grounds were very well kept, buildings painted pale yellow. I cannot get over the juxtaposition of this school and golf course directly across the highway from probably one of the poorest parts of town. I still have difficulty with the image of this shantytown on a hillside, on top of which were several cell towers looking down over a nature preserve, a golf course and an exclusive school.

From the school we drove to an area called Mamacona to visit a ranch called Cabalgatas. Here we were greeted by an 8 piece marching band and led to an area where we all sat in a row and were served pisco sours, tequenos (fried cheese with guacamole dip), & chicken kabobs with salsa de aji. The manager of the hacienda explained about these “caballos de paso” which were brought to Peru during the time of the conquest. They were quarterhorses that “danced.” After this, we were treated to a typical Peruvian folk dance called “Marianera.” The horses and their riders were Fandango (Victor), Picasso (Jose), Chilaco (Michelle Barclay), Motupano (Jorge), & Esplendo (Fuasto). We all rode and then went in for lunch beside a eucalyptus wood fire and a huge buffet. The food was: ensalada de choclo (corn), pina y palta (avocado), ensalada de pulpo (octopus) de olivo, ensalada de papas amarillas (yellow potatoes), relleno de arvejitas, zanahorias y mayonesa de leche (peas & carrots), ceviche de corvina, ensalada verde, arroz con pollo, saltado de champinones, and for dessert arroz con leche.

Upon returning to Lima we had a free evening. I walked the few blocks toward the ocean and explored the parque de amor and the mosaic love notes laid in the walls there.

**Wednesday, July 7 by Janet Miller**

Lima, Peru
This morning we eat breakfast in the hotel. The outer dining area of the restaurant is crowded with members of our group and other hotel guests. Our breakfast meal in the hotel restaurant is a rather hearty one consisting of fresh fruit, a variety of juices, eggs, bacon, croissants, cheese and ham. Of course, coffee and a selection of tea are available.

As we prepare to leave for the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Sharmon stays behind with Miryam to take care of replacing her credit cards and travelers checks that were “misplaced” or “borrowed for permanent usage.

We are taken by bus through the busy streets of Lima. There is lots of traffic and very few traffic lights. In a conversation with Marcela, I learn that traffic lights are only used on Sundays. During the workweek, police officers direct the traffic especially on the big avenue ‘La hora punta’ of Javier Prado (that goes in the east-west direction) and Paseo de la República (that goes in the north-south direction). I asked Marcela where all the cars come from. She tells me that many are imported used cars from Japan. Fujimoro was responsible for their import. The average cost of a used Japanese car is $3500.

Not only do I learn about traffic from Marcela, I learn that during the late 1980s until the early 1990s, terrorists frightened, mutilated, and killed many Peruvians. Marcela shares stories involving her family and friends. She has a friend whose arm was torn off by a bomb. The friend’s family tried to look for the arm afterwards only to find out that it had been taken by the terrorists. Marcela’s own brother who owned a farm at the time was stopped while driving a truck and robbed of sacks of potatoes by the terrorists. A close family friend of Marcela’s, who she referred to as her ‘tio del amor’, narrowly escaped his home before it was burned to the ground. His cows were even burned to death. Marcela goes on to describe other tragic events that occurred during this time. Babies were cut from the wombs of their mothers. In the region of Ayacucho, men were told to get on their knees and then they were beheaded. People were not allowed to be outside after midnight. Parents would stay awake at night awaiting the return of their children. Bombs would go off at all hours of the night. The electricity would be out for hours. This all ended with the election of Fujimoro. Fujimoro did not allow US Human Rights groups to enter during this time. He wanted to keep control of his own country.

Just before we arrive at the university, I ask Marcela about some teenagers I notice hanging out on a street corner. She refers to them as ‘palomillos’ or ‘muchachos atravesados’. We would probably describe them as hoodlums. Marcela says they steal purses.

We finally arrive at the university where we are met by Gustavo Buntinx, the director of the Centro Cultural de San Marcos. He explains that the original building was part of a Jesuit cloister and was built in the 17th century. Earthquakes mark its architectural history. The building became a public school in 1740. It was given to the University of San Marcos in 1867. The university moved from the site where the National Congress building now stands. The university was used as a military barracks during Peru’s war with Chile. ‘La Casona de San Marcos’ was remodeled after the war. In 1970, plans were made to demolish the entire site, but there was no money to do this. In 1992, Peru and Spain signed a treaty to restore the university. Restoration has been slow but continuous. Restoration must respond to the contemporary or modern agenda of Lima.

Restoration efforts have not been the university’s only concern. Last year it had to deal with 30 burglaries per hour. However, the university maintains a positive outlook. A common saying among university officials is “Estamos devolviendo la cuidad a la cuidadania” (We are returning the city to its citizenry.)
Students and faculty no longer use the “Casona”. It is now used for cultural activities such as music and art exhibits. These take place in what is known as ‘El Centro Cultural de San Marcos. The center has become the geographical and social frontier of the city. It offers special programs to train people to use their handicraft skills to restore the university.

Next we are introduced to Dr. Jorge Silva. According to our itinerary, “Dr. Silva received a Fulbright grant to pursue studies on Archaeology at the University of Michigan. He is currently professor in the Escuela de Arqueología of the Universidad Nacional Mayor of San Marcos. Dr. Silva has participated in several seminars both in Peru and abroad and writes in academic journals in topics that focus on Andean archaeology.”

Dr. Silva gives a lecture about Peru’s history. He divided it into the following:

**Lithic (12000-5000BC)**
Hunter gathering and coastal adaptations.

**Archaic (5000-1700BC)**
Village life and domestication of animals (llamas and alpacas in the highlands) and plants.

**Formativo (1700-100BC)**
Related temples on coastal highlands and the eastern parts of Peru. Human sacrifices took place.

**Regional cultures (100BC-500/600AD)**
First states formed by Nazca and Moche

**Huari (550-900AD)**
Maybe the collapse of culture. First empire of Peru
Late Kingdoms and States (900-1400AD)
Chimi? Empire

Tawantinsuyo (INKA) (1200-1532AD)
The empire consists of 4 regions.

Colonial (1532-1821AD)

Republican (1821-2004AD)

Dr. Silva then takes us on a tour of a museum located on the campus of the university. The museum houses examples of Nazca pottery and Chavin jewelry. In a separate storage area (approximately two stories high) metal shelves are used to store thousands of whole and fragments of Nazca, Chavin, Moche, and Inca pottery. A blanket dating back to 200 AD that was found in Paracas is currently being restored for preservation purposes.

We then visit a chapel constructed in the honor of “La Virgen de Loreto.” Frescos adorn the ceiling of the chapel. In the back of the chapel a mirror gives the illusion that the chapel is larger than it actually is. Our lunch is served in the university cafeteria. The cafeteria was unlike any I have ever eaten in. Every table is covered with a linen tablecloth and waiters serve us our food. As we leave the university, Dr. Silva explains that the “Plaza Mayor” located in front of the university was used in 2000 for the “Lava la bandera”. Instead of burning flags, people were asked to bring their flags to be washed. Washing the flag was seen as a baptism—a cleansing of the soul of the country.

The afternoon is spent visiting the “Museo Arqueológico Larco Herrera”.

Gathered by the arqueologist Rafael Larco Hoyle, this museum houses a collection of 45,000 pieces of art belonging to the Vicús, Mochica, and Chimú cultures. Hundreds of crowns, necklaces, ear and nose rings
made of gold, copper, and silver are kept in glass display cases. Pottery representing fertility and life can also be seen in this museum.

After we return to the hotel for a “free evening”, many of us choose to either dine in the hotel or adventure out onto the streets of Lima

**jueves, el 8 de julio by Katherine Carson**

We started the day with two lectures at the Pontifica Universidad Católica del Perú. The first to speak was Dra. Susana Aldana, a former Fulbrighter at the University of Alabama and a professor of history at the university. The topic of her talk was pre-Hispanic culture in Peru.

Dra. Aldana began by re-emphasizing the role of geography in Peru's history and economic development. Peru is considered part of the middle Andes region. As a result, it has the largest amount of geographical variation. The country contains the three main Andean landscapes: the jungle (la selva), the coast (la costa), and the highlands (la sierra). The lack of water along the coast and abundance of water and plantlife in the jungle make agriculture difficult in these two places. The extreme climate of the sierra presents similar problems.

Dra. Aldana went on to categorize the ancient cultures into three basic geographic regions: the Chimú in the north, the Chancas/Huanca (descendents of the Wari or Huari) in the middle, and the Quechuas (Incas) in the south. The Incas represent the culmination of the cultural achievements of the peoples that preceded them.

One theme of Dra. Aldana's talk was that an understanding of pre-Hispanic cultural traditions in Peru can help one to comprehend the structure of and issues facing Peruvian society today. As one example, religion served as the "axis of society" in pre-Hispanic times. This is still true today. Another interesting facet of pre-Hispanic society was that it was very hierarchical, and all production (of textiles, mining, etc.) was organized to support the consumption of the elites. This aspect of pre-Hispanic society is interesting because this structure persisted until at least the early 20th century (some might argue it continues today).

As an example, in the 1940s and 1950s one of the main critiques of Latin American economies from members of the dependencia (dependency) school of economic thought was that production and importation was organized for the consumption of the elites. They argued that the economy ought to be reorganized in order to benefit the masses. Most dependencia writers start at colonization when discussing this way of organizing society, but at least in Peru, one might argue that this type of organization predated colonial times. (Note: This information is not from the lecture, but from Dr. Carson's knowledge of economic issues in Latin America).

One still hears these arguments today. They are part of the reason why Latin Americans often express dissatisfaction with democracy. These sorts of arguments are made by Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and Alan Garcia in Peru. In any event, the lesson we can take from Dra. Aldana's talk is that it is important to keep in mind Peru's past when thinking about its present and future.

The second speaker was Dra. Cecilia Esparza, a professor of literature. Dra. Esparza was a Fulbright scholar as well. She studied for her MA at SUNY Stonybrook, and earned her Ph.D. in comparative literature from NYU. She discussed the work of José Maria Arguedas, an important Peruvian author.

Arguedas was born in the Andes. His birth mother died when he was 2 1/2. His step mother was the daughter of a hacendado. She did not like José (presumably because he was the son of her husband's first wife - although Dra. Esparza did not really discuss the reasons behind this dislike), so she made him live in the kitchen with the servants, who were all Quechua. As a result, Arguedas knew how to speak both Quechua and Spanish, and had a great love of the Quechua people and culture. However, he also felt torn between two worlds, and never really felt as though he belonged anywhere. These themes pervade his writing.

Arguedas came of age in a period in which writing about the native cultures was popular. This type of literature was called indigenismo. In these works, indians were depicted as simpler, closer to nature. The image was very stereotyped - one might even call it condescending. Arguedas' work was in some ways an answer to this genre. He wanted the native culture to be known, understood and respected by the Western world. At the same time, his writing reflects his sense of being caught between two worlds and not really fitting into either one, as well as the pain he feels for the suffering of the Quechua people. Dra. Esparza
discussed two passages from the first chapter of Arguedas' book, "Deep Rivers," which illustrate these feelings. Scholars believe that Arguedas' sense of displacement is one reason why he ultimately committed suicide.

After the lectures, we had a tour of the campus. Several group members found useful resources at the bookstore for their projects. The tour included a stop at an ExpoFeria about corporate social and environmental responsibility. Many of the main Peruvian corporations had displays there. Two of interest were the exhibits of the Yanacocha mining company (Newmont Mines, headquartered in Denver, CO) and Backus, the Peruvian brewing company. In the case of the former, the exhibit was interesting because it is somewhat ironic to see an exhibit promoting environmental responsibility from a company which has had major problems with mercury contamination in the recent past. The latter was promoting their efforts to provide clean, potable water to the communities in which they locate their brewing operations. Such efforts are not surprising, as having clean water is necessary to the brewing process.

After the campus tour, we had lunch at the faculty dining hall and departed for the Indian mercado in Miraflores. Once we arrived at the mercado, all of the men mysteriously disappeared (hmmm......). The rest of us had a fantastic time exploring the market. Everyone found some great gifts, but Sharmon won the prize for being the power shopper. Ann, Brenna, and Cyntia came away with a zooful of finger puppets for their classes (over 100 among the three of them), and a fight nearly broke out over the mermaid. Kate bought "el mercado" in the form of an arpillera - an embroidered tapestry that depicts all of the traditional products of Peru. The bus ride home was punctuated by a chorus of "Bob Esponja" (the Spanish version of the Sponge Bob theme song) and a puppet show featuring the puppet of the same name.

In the evening, we went to see a show of traditional Peruvian music and dance at a place called Las Brisas de Titicaca (the breezes of Titicaca). The show featured a variety of dances, which some later described as Vegas meets Peru. The huayla, one of the last dances performed, and the Peruvian version of the hora were favorites.

The bus returned to the hotel around 1 am, where we all crawled heavy-lidded up to our rooms to end another fantastic day.

Friday, July 9 by Brenna McCoy Paracas

What a day! We left Lima this morning, heading for Pachacamac and then further south to the coast. It was one of those days for me that started off pretty normal and then got better and better and better! The ruins at Pachacamac were amazing for two reasons … 1) The complex is HUGE – including multiple plazas, living quarters, temples and palaces; 2) I have never encountered ruins in such a state of, well, ruin! I had a very hard time getting my head around the fact that there had seemingly been very little effort to preserve and restore the site until I had the chance to speak with Dr. Silva (from San Marcos). He explained to me that the vast abundance of archeological sites (people find artifacts in their back yards) and the lack of monetary resources in Perú explained what I saw. They do what they can, but have to choose where to put what resources they have. The other piece I had to consider was the building materials used – I guess it only makes sense that if one builds with sand/adobe bricks, one must expect erosion to be a swift enemy.

Now, if you have your Ancient Cultures of Perú flow chart handy, it can walk you through all the cultures that inhabited Pachacame through the years … needless to say that just about everyone was there. The Incas were the last to be there, and this is one of the sites where Pizarro stayed during his conquest of the empire … the building where he stayed is still partially standing! The history is AMAZING!! I feel overwhelmed by what I’ve seen!

After our visit to the ruins and after coaxing Bob out of one of temples, we again boarded the bus and headed further south. Now, I have to tell you all that I was fascinated by the coastal scenery along the Pan-American Highway! I have NEVER in my life seen a desert like that in Perú! It is so stark and harsh! I was amazed by the shanty towns we saw where people had begun to construct homes out of reed mat walls. When we finally arrived at our final destination, Paracas, we all received a wonderful surprise! The SUN, yes I said SUN, was SHINING!!!! I realize that not everyone was as affected as I, but for a girl who lives in a state that gets +300 days of sun a year, our first week in Lima was very difficult! So, as we soaked up the warm rays, we settled into our hotel/resort. It’s amazing that in the middle of a barren desert there
exists such an oasis! The Hotel Paracas is lush and green, complete with grass for mini-golf and palm trees. I am thinking that human ingenuity might have had something to do with this … just a thought. Anyway, we dropped off our luggage in our little cabins and then had lunch. Now, this was a momentous occasion – we did NOT have our typical chicken. No, we had FISH!!! What a treat! YUM!!

Our next stop was the nature preserve. At this point, I must apologize to the English speaking bus … I can’t report on the details of your tour. Anyway, I again was struck by the barren landscape … even more so than what we had seen along the highway. At first we stuck close to the coast line. We stopped at the preserve’s museum – Kate, never forget «La Scooby-sneaky» - and then we saw FLAMINGOES!!!! They were ever so very beautiful, and to quote my students, they were just plain COOL!!!! Thanks to Bob and Clive, we were able to get a closer look with the use of their «bi-no’s». I also got to see my favorite marine bird, the pelican. I cannot contain my amusement as I watch them dive, Kamikaze-style into the water to fish!

There was only sand, sand, and more sand to be seen as we headed out to see La catedral. There was nothing living to be seen – not plant nor animal. It made me think that we had beamed to another planet, something out of Star Wars or maybe Mars. I spent this portion of the ride in awe, oh, and trying not to fall out of my seat as we bumped over the terrain. Just when I thought the desert would NEVER end, it did just that! It fell off into the Pacific Ocean. La catedral is a rock formation created by the ocean water and the wind. It was stunningly beautiful. The contrast between the yellow-colored sand, the blackness of the cliffs, the blue-green of the water and the intense blue of sky took my breath away. I found myself sitting on the edge of the cliff, unable to do anything but take it all in and memorize the scene. I guess this is a habit of mine – in every country I’ve visited; there has been a place like this where I find myself humbled by nature and overwhelmed by the beauty. I didn’t expect to find it so soon into this adventure.

I can’t imagine what we will see next and how it will compare with this!

Saturday, el 10 de julio by Anne Gaspers

The morning started off early with a little misting as we boarded the boat to visit Las Islas Ballestas. As we were on our way, we saw many different birds: pelicans, cormorants, and the Inca tern. Then we saw 'El Candelabro' which has three myths behind it. One was that it was on of the first Nazca lines; one was that pirates made it in colonial times; one was that it was made by the Paracas peoples to symbolize the cactus they used as a medicinal hallucinogenic. The lines are one meter deep and never blow away, not even in sandstorms.
As we took off again, the sea was gray and undulating, the sea lions kept poking their heads up out of the ocean and George was singing! Oh what a beautiful morning...even with no sun!

The Islas Ballestas get their name from the arches that look similar to a bow that they use in archery. As we stopped to take photos, we saw a group of penguins sticking their heads up out of the water. It's amazing to be up next to the islands and see the hundreds and thousands of birds. We saw pelicans, penguins, bubis, zarcillos, guanay. You can see that the guano (bird poop) has discolored much of the top of the islands. But instead of white, it has a yellow color. The sea lions were just draped over some rocks hanging out. The cormorants were flying in a vee formation just like Canadian geese. And the seagulls were sitting on the water around us like ducks. Some were fishing and some seemed to be socializing. What looked like an old dock was sticking out from the island and we saw turkey vultures perched upon it. The sea lions were grunting and playing on another island while fishermen steered their boats around looking for fish. The birds were perched on the rocks as if they were waiting for something to happen.

The smell of the guano is almost over-powering as we went into a cavern and through one of the arches we could see an entire colony of sea lions. As we continued around, we saw men 'mining' guano and using a pulley system to load it onto a barge. Peru fought a war with another country in 1865 over the rights to the guano on the islands. Now, the government gives permission to the Ministry of Agriculture to 'clean' the guano off the island every nine years. It takes them almost three months to collect all of the guano.

Janelle's sweater was the first casualty to guano rain.

The baby bubis look very fluffy even though they are almost the same size as the full-grown ones. One lone sea lion seemed to be stranded on a rock amidst the birds. Maybe he just wanted some alone time! There was a family of crabs crawling up the rocks. Janelle felt inspired to create the following haiku:

gray, misty
stinky
how the birds fly

Islas Ballestas
The sound the bubis made seemed to be a cross between a goose and a duck. The bottom parts of the rocks are covered in barnacles, starfish and anemones (sol de mar, estrella de mar). The birds dive bomb into the water to catch fish, and look like they just decide on the spur of the moment and then plop into the water. I think we managed to make it through the birds without any 'ploppin' directly onto anyone. Janelle is still ready to sacrifice someone to the sea so that the sun will come out...I have a feeling it might be me! But for now, the clouds and mist hang about the islands shrouding them from view as we return to Paracas.

Our second stop for the day was la Hacienda San José de Chincha. The Hacienda was established in the 1680’s on 3000 hectares of land. In 1864, slavery was abolished in Peru but continued in this area until 1879 when the last member of the founding family was murdered on the steps of the Hacienda on Christmas Day. He was murdered by the slaves in an uprising because of the poor treatment. Since that day, the Hacienda has passed through many hands. The current owner is a descendant of Manuel Cilloniz and Manuela Eguiren de Cilloniz who bought it in 1919. There are catacombs that connect to the chapel and the rooms. It is so dark and musty down there that you can't see without a light and it's almost impossible to breathe. They used these to hide from pirates and have buried some of the original family members there.

We ate a wonderful lunch at the Hacienda while being serenaded by a great musical group and watching some of the 'danzas negras'. The typical foods of the region included the carapulcra (a dish with potatoes and is very spicy); the olluquitos is made with a certain kind of potato and tasted similar (to me) to the way the air smells in the catacombs; el tamal tasted similar to the Mexican one but it is orange; the picarones are doughnuts with lots of honey on them. The band included the following instruments: guitar, bongos, congas, box drum, and a cow bell. The influence in this area is very African because the original owners brought over 1000 slaves to work in the cotton and sugar cane fields. Because of this, the dancing seems very different from what we saw at Las Brisas del Titicaca. There is a lot more hip movement and hard stepping. They even did one dance that was very similar to the stepping that many African-Americans do.
all over the US. The final dance was with short sticks lit on fire and they had newspapers pinned to their bums like tails. It's called 'el alcatraz'. The object was to light the paper on fire. Kate and Jeanne got to participate and Jeanne lit one of the boy's tails on fire and he had to sit down to put it out!

Sunday, July 11 by Robert Sitler

This, the only complete free day of our remarkable journey began at sunrise, a subtle affair viewed from the roof of the Hotel Sol de Oro. The constant haze of the "garúa" is thick enough to never really allow one to determine the sun's precise location. The gradually increasing lighting was the only sign that, in fact, Tayta Inti's face shined above. In the distance, the grey Pacific was indistinguishable from the sky except for the traces of evenly spaced breakers advancing to the rocky shore. Unlike in most of Latin America, it was from these western waters that Spanish invaders emerged to subdue the Amerindian natives, known in Kechwa as the Runa, the "people."

After a quick workout, I stopped for a shower, serenaded by George's pleasant rendition of the Mexican classic "Cielito lindo" (Ay ay ay ay. Canta, no llores), a carry-over from yesterday's sing-along on the bus north to Lima from Paracas.

While I never eat breakfast at home, it's become one of my favorite parts of the day here. Fruit juices (papaya, piña, naranja, melón), flavored yogurts, a wonderfully light fresh cheese and baked goods made for a solid start on the day. In spite of being freshly brewed and kept constantly on a hot plate, the coffee somehow remains tepid, one of the tiny "miracles" here that add wonder to the day.

For most of us, today was another chance to shop at the now famous Indian Market. Happy faces returned to the hotel with a bounty of jewelry, clothing and other choice articles for loved ones and friends. According to Doña Marcelita, this market was once located near the airport for the use of departing travelers but was relocated here and to other sites in Lima when the area around the airport became too dangerous for the turistas.

My own day included partial participation in 3 different Sunday masses (lapsed Catholics like myself can get away with this.) In every case, the officiating priest was an aging gentleman, a result of the waning popularity of the ecclesiastical calling among Catholic youth. One of the mass celebrations was in the Cathedral where the National Police were honoring those officers who had died in the previous year. Semi-automatic weaponry was abundant and a remarkable number of the younger officers, traffic police in particular, were women.

In front of President Toledo's palace, a religious procession successfully competed for the large, Sunday crowd's attention, carrying an image of the Virgen del Carmen from its shrine several blocks from the Plaza Mayor. She was led by a visiting group of Amerindian musicians and dancers from Cuzco, who looked quite different from the "Indians" we saw dancing in the floor show at the Brisas del Titicaca. Some in the group wore full face ski masks, reminding me of the Mayan Zapatistas in Mexico. A demure and dignified elder led the rather boisterous group while a man dressed as a gorilla cavorted in the admiring crowd playing the role of a jester.

A curious scene unfolded as the group approached the corner of the Plaza. A phalanx of riot police stood behind their plastic shields, blocking a left turn. At the same moment, the armored water cannon that we had seen on our group visit rolled directly toward the front of the procession, blocking its forward progress. The "gorilla" quickly feigned an attack on the vehicle, climbing up on top, ripping upon the engine hood and thus obstructing the operators view as the Runa pilgrims broke into delighted shouts. My inclination to take cover before the proverbial s... hit the fan quickly subsided as the ape man ran back into the crowd of his hermanos. The police graciously did nothing to pursue the matter, but it struck me as a clear flash of a "rage against the machine" streak that may linger in the indigenous mind. The vehicle had not been intended to impinge on the crowd but had arrived there in a case of poor timing. After taking a turn past the policemen, the procession continued merrily on its way.

From the Plaza I walked across the trash-strewn and heavily polluted, frothy Río Rimac into a neighborhood that presented a stark contrast with our "home" in Miraflores. I was drawn to a tiny storefront with a large aquarium of live frogs in it. I was told that the frogs were cooked fresh and blended with the medicinal maca root from the highlands to produce a restorative tonic. Our city guide Alberto had told me that maca was the Viagra of Peru. My own experience with the root had been "uninspiring" but "sólo Dios
sabe” what the effects would have been with freshly blended frog parts included. One of my omnivorous compañeros will have to be the kuy (guinea pig) on this one.

**Monday, July 12 by Kathleen Harris**

Things don't always turn out the way you've planned. Ask Marcela about our trip to the jungle, rearranged a couple of times, finally just impossible to make happen. Today, we should be in Iquitos, popping malaria meds and slathering ourselves with toxic DEET. Instead, we ventured as far as San Borja, the suburban district of Lima that is home to the Fulbright Commission in Peru. No boat rides today: our books headed off on their own Fed Ex adventure, but we were in for a lecture.

Bart Dean is an anthropology professor at the University of Kansas, with an appointment at the Universidad de San Marcos. He commiserates with our disappointment and tells us that his first trip to the Amazon was also frustrated by circumstances. He had to settle for Lima that time, but since then, for the past 20 years, he has been coming to Peru to study and to live in this part of the country that he obviously loves.

So we aren't in the jungle, but as Dean launches into his compelling, virtual tour of the region, it's clear that a presentation from ‘him’ is the next best thing. Enthusiasm is too weak a word. He gives a rapid, engaging overview of the cultural diversity that characterizes north east Peru: 65 distinct indigenous linguistic groups, ranging from the numerically overwhelming, like the Cocoma at 150,000 members to groups on the verge of what Dean calls "language death", like the Taushina with only four or five native speakers left.

He talks even more passionately -- hard to believe this is possible -- about the forces that have assaulted the regions people: "entrepreneurs", carpetbaggers, from other places after timber, coca, and, lately, gold; border disputes; the Sendero Luminoso. Dean says that the Sendero Luminoso had such well-disguised solutions for a region full of frustrated people that it nearly prevailed by 1989 or 1990. But in 1992 the Sendero's leader, Guzman, was captured and, for better or for worse, the authoritarian tactics of the Fujimori government that followed drove the remnants of the movement from Lima's outskirts back into the jungle. As he speaks about the waves of people from outside the region with little regard for anything except the profits they can make from its resources, it is clear that although Dean studies Amazonian Peru, he is past retreating into the safety of academic objectivity because he considers himself at home there. A couple of days in Iquitos would have been a wonderful adventure, dropping in by plane to this island in the Amazon jungle and then jetting out again. But Dean gives us a sense of the long-term commitment and responsibility that he feels for the Peruvian Amazon. I am jealous of him until he says that he's had malaria twice.

The governing principle for the afternoon is also "things don't always turn out the way you've planned": Miriam could not work out the cooking demonstration she'd planned at our hotel. Instead of using our hotel's overpriced facilities and reluctant chefs, Miriam called on her son Vittorio, a chef whose mother was asking him for a favor, to do the demonstration; the hotel's posh but impersonal space was substituted by Miriam's mother's apartment, with a view of that huaca we saw on our first day in Lima. Too lazy to go back, now there it is again out the window. But now there is a cooking show to watch. Vittorio is dressed in his toque and is very serious; he is assisted by his brother, Paolo (Paolo) who translates for him. The brothers take us through a series of typical Peruvian specialties, from the Pisco sour to ceviche, Vittorio precisely moving, tasting, arranging and Paolo humoring his brother's seriousness. The final dish is a kind of stew that takes us into the kitchen. To me a goal when traveling is to get into someone's house -- not the guided tour into the Maasai hut, but actually invited in. This opportunity might not really count since Miriam was reacting to a sort of panic, probably, since her other arrangements fell through, but loitering near the stove, I figured I had come somewhat closer to feeling at home here myself. As we said goodbye. I gave Miriam's mom the deluxe paperweight of Loyola Marymount that I was saving in case I met an ambassador or a university president, but I thought she would appreciate it more. I certainly appreciated her hospitality

**Tuesday, July 13 by Julia Durand  Cuzco**

After an early wake up call in Lima, we arrived in Cuzco. Here is a drawing depicting the narrow streets of Cuzco.
We were told by our guide from airport, "they take your underwear without taking your pants." Luckily none of us lost our underwear nor our belongings in Cuzco. Still some of us lost our feeling of well-being for a few days at the fine altitude. Members in our group were falling like flies some due to the altitude, and others to the dreaded Diamox. We were told to drink lots of coca tea and water, which most of us did. Some of us skipped the coca tea, those work-imposed drug tests are such a pain. Despite the altitude we enjoyed the fine blue skies after the gray mist of Lima.

In addition to the altitude, we awaited the Paro (strike) the next day. A school visit was cancelled. We could envision fresher air with the absence of taxis. We realized we needed to see what we could see today.

With our trusty guide Anna Maria we saw quite a lot in Cuzco. She took us to cathedrals and ruins, and we learned of the feats of the Incas. Our hotel Libertador like many buildings in Cuzco had been built from Inca walls. Ana Maria told us how many of the 17 churches in Lima were built on Inca walls since these buildings stood the test of time, unlike the buildings constructed by the Spanish. We learned of the twelve point keystone rocks which weren't cut but instead were fitted together. We heard how the Incas transported these huge rocks over 30 km with stone rollers. We marveled about how they were able to move this rock through this mountainous terrain at this altitude. Not only did we see the 12 point rocks, we saw the temples and buildings constructed at a 15-20 degree incline. This would later protect these buildings from earthquakes.

We learned of the sacred nature of the constellations, rainbows, lightening and mother earth. As we visited the Temple of the Stars we learned the Incas used the stars to determine if it would rain and whether the wheat, barley and oats would grow. We saw how the sun fell directly through the center of the window during the winter solstice in Peru on June 21.

We came to understand that the Cuscan flag was not a tribute to gays as it has become in the U.S. but instead a symbol of the sacred rainbow. We heard how Fujimori arrived in San Francisco at first thinking there were many Cusquenans, only to learn later the flag was not a tribute to Cuzco.
The churches we saw in Cuzco were a tribute to Spanish excess. 1/4 of Incan gold was used in this tribute to the Spanish. Ornate wood chairs, sheets of silver, a crown of diamonds all pointed to the plunder of the Incan empire. In addition, we saw a painting of the last supper with an Incan twist. They were eating kuy, guinea pig.

After a trip to ruins outside of town and the opportunity for some more shopping at an Alpaca farm, we returned to the hotel. Many enjoyed a light supper at the hotel with traditional music, while others ventured into the square. Still others were thankful for the per diem while paying $4 for bananas in the hotel to combat the nausea from the altitude.

This day was just the first for us to fulfill a dream many had of visiting this land rich with Incan history, vistas and ruins.

Wednesday, July 14 by George Chu

The sun rose above the hills of Incan ruins in Cuzco--to us the rising of the sun had special meaning, after missing it our entire time in Lima. Attention was focused on the Plaza de Armas (town square) where labor unions and other groups were demonstrating as part of the national work stoppage (el paro).

Each union group marched with a banner, chanting and singing, with a common theme of down with the Toledo government as well as many individual things each different group wanted to see changed. There was some minor violence reported by the television in Lima. Here in Cuzco, even though most stores were closed, the tourist trade continued in full force, benefiting from slightly cleaner air since cars and buses were mainly off the roads.

Those of us accustomed to youth hostels were trying hard to get used to the five-star luxury of the Hotel Libertador (ironic title)! Several members of the group still showed altitude sickness symptoms (Soroche), mainly some combination of headache, dizziness, and indigestion. Some of the indigestion had preceded our arrival here at about 11,000 feet, so it might be a combination of elements at work on us. I, for one, felt we were in a way lucky not to have just arrived from the Amazon, where the climate is so dramatically different.

The rivers of this area descend from the Andes to form the Amazon basin, and we will experience the progression of climates as we descend to Macchu Picchu. Peru has about 28 different climatic regions, due to the various Andes elevations. The Inca Museum provided us with an excellent overview of many of the civilizations in the Andes dating back thousands of years, and of their incredible artistic, architectural, and agricultural sophistication.

Ana Maria Galdo was our experienced tour guide, and she will accompany us for the next couple of days as we continue to explore this incomparable heritage of civilization. Even though the Spanish cathedral (built 1560-1650) is impressive, one wishes that all the gold had been left with the Andean civilizations.

Excerpt from Darlene Voeltz

We Americans many times burrow through life with a narrow vision, looking at the goal or vision ahead while not observing all that is within the tunnel. It is refreshing to regress into slower times. While many of us Americans rush to work each day via getting off the streets and into our work site buildings, many people here in the city stand on the street all day trying to eek out their living. Here in Cuzco, as well as in Lima, 4 to 6-year old boys plead for business by offering to shine shoes. Mothers with babies dress in Peruvian wear and amiably agree to have their photo taken for one sole’. Others stand with their llamas or alpacas waiting for a photo opportunity. Yet others sell film, cigarettes, postcards, finger puppets, or cook alongside the streets trying to make a sale. It becomes obvious that there is a slippery slope here of preserving culture yet exploiting the people.

Tonight we ate at an exquisite Peruvian restaurant, the TUNUPA in the Plaza de Armas in Cuzco, complete with entertainment, —we love the wooden flutes and the dancing!. After Pisco sours, we were treated to the best buffet food ever!! The dishes included: tout poche, leek quiche, fish carpaccio, alpaca with pisco sauce, lamb with rosemary, chicken with aguaymanto, pork with peper sauce, broccoli soufflé, potatoes chips with onions, fish with leek sauce, eggplant pate, curry chicken, and empanadas--(all above Spanish spellings!!) For dessert we had our choices (yes we sampled many) of purple corn pudding, apple pye, strawberry pie, black forest dessert, kiwi tart, chocolate cake stuffed with lucuma mousse, rice pudding, and tropical cheese cake. We ate this evening with an American Fulbright Scholar studying here for a year.
Thursday, July 15, 2004 by Sharmon Hagler

Little did I realize as I awoke this morning that I would be visiting one of the most beautiful areas in the world. Our morning began with a bus ride to the Puca Pucara. This was an impressionable Inca site. It was easy in Cuzco to understand the Inca building methods. However as we entered the area, a tremendous respect for the foresight into this civilization became apparent. As the main entrance to the Cuzco area from the jungle and Sacred Valley, researchers presume the area was used for protection as there was no evidence of temples or palaces. The water supply systems were very advanced. The aqueducts are still working from the Incan times during the 1400s. I thought it was very interesting that the American concept of the Pony Express riders was not all that advanced!!! Inca runners were doing essentially the same thing several hundred years earlier.....only their journey was on foot!!!! Our journey also took us past some tumbas, which were resting places and also used for the purification of priests.

Perhaps my rural upbringing allowed me a great appreciation for the physical beauty and personal sacrifice of the residents. My preconceived ideas of the Valle Sagrado de Urubamba were totally underestimated. The mountains of this valley (17,000 to 20,000 feet high) soared majestically above the fertile valleys of the Urubamba River. The Sacred Valley lies at an attitude of 9000 feet above sea level. I must admit that physically, I enjoyed being able to breathe without huffing and puffing!!! The mountain valley is among the most fertile in the Southern hemisphere.

The indigenous who live in the valley are considered wealthy. While families live in adobe dwellings (by the way, the adobe is made from mud, straw, water, cactus, and reinforced with guinea pig hair) and have little money, every item they need for survival is provided by the soil of the valley. Food and livestock are plentiful as are materials for heat. There are 27 types of corn grown here (200 during Incan times). The use of terraces continues from the days of the Incas. Wheat, barley, and potatoes (150 types), avocado, oranges, and peaches are also grown; they raise two crops per year. Most farming is done by hand or with the use of horses, donkeys, or mules. The average temperature is 50 degrees in the winter and 67 in the summer. The community, related by blood, is organized into small communities and elects its own government. They collect “taxes.” Bartering is an important part of the economic base of these
communities. Just a tidbit on the family life in the valley… most are married by the time they are 14 or 15. Since a majority are Catholic, birth control is not practiced; hence, families with 8 to 10 children are not uncommon. The average age is 67 years. Another interesting feature of these communities are the “decorations” (two bulls to keep the evil spirits away and a cross affirming the Catholic faith) attached to the peak of the roofs… these are symbols of good luck.

The next stop was to a school, The Virgin of the Guadeloupe. As educators who constantly complain about cutbacks in our schools, we were extremely humbled as we viewed a school with so little. This was extreme poverty here. School is in session for ½ day, and there are two sessions, with a different teacher each session. Students may walk 1 to 2 hours to attend classes. The school is available for students ages 6 to 16 years. Teachers are paid the equivalent of 200 soles per month ($59)!! Fujumori built 3000 schools during his tenure; illiteracy rates dropped from 40 to 20 percent. He also offered breakfast and lunch for the students. It definitely will be hard to listen to my students complain about school lunches and bus rides. The buildings were old, classrooms small (about 20 students), and the students were eager for our attention.

The guide talked about discoveries of mummies in this area. The mummies had missing organs and the cavities were filled with dirt, plants and salt to preserve the body.

Once again we were treated to a fantastic lunch at the TUNUPA in Sacred Valley. The buffet was incredible—much like the Tunupa in Cuzco, and we all ate way too much. Afterward, we ventured out the back of the restaurant and walked through the gardens, down to the river, and even rested in hammocks (much needed after eating so much!).

I am so glad that I did walk a lot before I arrived at Olllambuya. The village, left intact by the Spanish, gave a view of daily life during the Inca times. Native men can be identified by red ponchos and hats. Women wear black skirts, red blankets, and hats. It was quite a sight to see an older man in native costume leading a small herd of llamas through the narrow stone streets. As I looked around the countryside I could see the ruins of the Inca grain bins. Grains and potatoes could be stored for up to five years. The adobe homes were built around courtyards. Often cacti and papaya would be seen growing from the yellow roofs. The streets had the water supply running along the edge. I feel fortunate (I think) to enter a home. It was quite a sight to see the families pet guineas running around the floor (all I could think of is how they would be tomorrow’s dinner). Small wall niches contained skulls of the ancestors which acted as protectors over the family. Meat was drying in the courtyard. I felt very fortunate for this look into the family life.

Probably the next event defiantly proved what I was made of!!! As I started to walk up the terraces, I was amazed at the fortitude of the Incas. For my short legs, the assent was pretty difficult. Yet, I visualized the picture of the lower terraces full of peanuts and cocoa leaves while the upper portion grew the potatoes and grains for daily consumption. I can only imagine the tedious routine of carrying in the soil and gravel which was used for drainage. The Incas truly were a civilization that valued the earth and each individual person’s role in the daily routine.

On the way back to Cuzco our bus was stopped and the patrolling officer asked to see the insurance card, which thankfully our drive had!! Cost of insurance per year for the bus is $150.

Friday, July 16 by Janelle Bondor

Macchu Picchu, Old Mountain Act One – 0 – Dark - 30

After our wake-up calls and indulging in the ever impressive breakfast buffet, the Fulbright cast boards the train to Machu Picchu, leaving the ‘navel of the earth’ for the ‘eyebrow of the jungle’. The voice of Ana Maria punctuates the compartment, comparing the train to the Orient Express, but the pace is leisurely (3 hours and 45 minutes, with switchbacks, to travel 110 km through the Andes). Doctors on a mission trip mill about making small talk. The train rambles by abode brick houses, fields, graveyards, playgrounds, pigs and dogs scavenging in trash heaps. The valley is filled with fog, but in the background the snow-capped Andes glisten in the sun. After a delectable breakfast of a shredded-chicken sandwich (from which Belen later became ill), the train follows the river through the red clay gorge. The lines to the rest room wind almost as long as the Incan trail. The landscape changes dramatically; like separate shots in a
slide show: boulders and yellow flowers accent the river banks; stony slopes melt into green; ledges of snow threaten to envelop towering mountains.

The 82 km mark of the journey marks the intersection with the Incan trail, and the beginning of a four-day foot journey to the Old Mountain (best time for this would be in May, but hikers must register in advance and there is a cost of $500). The appearance of jungle foliage is juxtaposed with the icy mountains. Along the trail a porter recently won a 27 mile race in 3 hours and 20 minutes. The Fulbrighters board the bus in Aguas Calientes for the last leg of the journey.

Act Two – The Lost City

After 500 years under a shroud of vegetation, the “lost” city was “discovered” by Hiram Bingham, not without the help of a local who sold the secret for one sol. The Spaniards had never touched the place protected by the Urubamba River. The 248 homes had most likely housed 1,000 people, and at Bingham’s arrival only two families lived there. What could explain this drastic depopulation? Fleeing in the face of the Spanish, with gold into the jungle? Evidence at the site supports the idea that depopulation was unexpected--buildings were abandoned before they were completed.

Most of the information about Machu Picchu is speculative. All artifacts, such as ceramics, mummies, or textiles were gone. It seems as though the site was used for religious purposes, as there are numerous temples (Temple of the Sun, of the Condor and of the Three Windows). A variety of non-native rocks suggest that people journeyed from afar to bring offerings to the spot.

The intricate terraces that dominate most photos of the lost city were multi-purpose: decorative, agricultural and structural, to prevent erosion. Ironically, the 3,000 visitors who come to admire them daily during the high season are causing damage and might eventually be restricted to viewing them from afar.

Act Three – ‘Sol’ Train / Coca Dreams

Donde está Arifeen? (Or: A Better Option)

People mill about the train, inhaling the diesel fumes. Purchases of dolls are made through open windows. The train proceeds to pull out slowly and passengers doze and admire the landscape. Suddenly, a young man (with a suspiciously similar build to the cute train attendant) dressed in an extravagant “traditional” outfit bursts through the aisle wearing a gay-rights ski mask. He is doing a highland dance. The music transitions to techno and the plodding tourist train is transformed into a rocking disco complete with a runway show of alpaca delights (How do you like that use of alliteration?). Is it just another coca dream? No, Bob is in coca rehab and Arifeen is still MIA, but a “strange” man has been discovered in the first car. The fashion show climaxes with “Staying Alive”, the song that marked the year Clive purchased the sweater which he so frequently wore. (Obviously the sweater construction was superior to that of his Purmamarca T-shirt, may it rest in pieces). The group remains punch-drunk giggly until a return to Cuzco.

That evening Sharmon, Janet, Marcela, Julie and Darlene took an 11-year old street vendor to dinner. She ordered guinea pig (the delicacy in Peru—one we thought we’d all get to taste, but didn’t.) She could recite the U.S. presidents BACKWARDS!! She learned English on the street while selling finger puppets to help her family make a living, and she was a very good conversationalist.

When we left Cuzco, the hotel charged Marcela full room rate plus 29 percent because she was Peruvian. Visitors do not pay tax if they’ve been here less than 60 days.

Saturday, July 17 by Michelle Barclay Puno

On Saturday, we had the opportunity to travel to another destination in Peru. We left the mountains of Cuzco and flew to Juliaca, a town of 178,500 inhabitants and the largest city in the Providence of Puno. Juliaca is a commercial center and is close to Bolivia and Chile which lends to a strong black market. Women here wear layered skirts, providing them the opportunity to bring in contraband from Bolivia and sell it for cheaper on the Black Market. From Juliaca we traveled south to Puno, which is the capital of the Providence of Puno. This town of 103,000 inhabitants became the main textile center of alpaca fibers. The town appears extremely poor, with old, run-down buildings. It gives a Chernobyl feeling.
Puno is one of the most important cities on the edge of Lake Titicaca, the most navigable and highest lake of the world. Puno is also considered the Folk Capital of America because of its 300 typical dances. We arrived at Hotel Isla Esteves and were again advised to take it easy, drink the coca tea and to take an oxygen treatment to combat the effects of the elevation of 3,830 meters. Puno’s high altitude gives it extreme weather conditions. Nights here get especially cold, particularly during the winter. The hotel was surrounded by the night lights of Puno on one side and Lake Titicaca on the other. Average salaries here are $2-300 per month. Everyone spent the evening relaxing in the hotel, watching the Peru/Argentina soccer game and enjoying dinner and conversations around the fireplace.

Sunday, July 18 by Arifeen Daneshyar

The day started with an animated discussion with Robert Sitler and Clive Thomas over breakfast -- with a magnificent view of Lake Titicaca – Robert sharing his perspective on spirituality in India and Clive his views on socialism. To me these freewheeling discussions were one of the most rewarding aspects of our Fulbright experience. Right after breakfast, we left for Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world. It was a beautiful day with a light breeze. We were in an exuberant mood. I headed for the upper deck with half a dozen colleagues, where conversation gravitated toward Cuba. Four of us had been to Cuba and had interesting experiences to share. It was one of the few occasions when I saw Brenna McCoy so serious. She had definite views on Castro and Cuba, and she wanted us to hear them.

We stopped at a floating reed island -- once inhabited by the Uros – and admired ancient lifestyle, women wearing bowler hats and men knitting their own brightly colored hats. Stricken by poverty, the islanders survive by selling handicrafts to tourists like us. Some of us tasted soft roots of the reed -- quite edible, actually. We stopped, just before noon, at Taquile Island, home of skilled weavers. The design and color of the headgear were supposed to indicate the social standing and marital status of the wearer. The quality of the garments was excellent. We stopped at a restaurant for lunch -- a simple meal of fish and rice. I had to try the local beer -- delicious, smooth, and potent. After lunch I walked around the island and was amused to find a sign indicating the distance to New Delhi -- 16,341 km.

Because of a mix up in our sail back to the hotel, we had to wait for over an hour. By the time we left weather had turned chilly and stormy. We huddled in the inside cabin. Anne Gaspers sprawled on the floor, oblivious to her surroundings. A few diehards stayed on the deck outside. We could hear their belly laughs. God only knows what they were laughing about. Katherine Carson, normally a serious person, joined the gang in their antics.

I wish we had left on time and saved ourselves from the choppy ride. Back at Hotel Libertador, one of the fanciest hotels we stayed during our sojourn, several cups of hot coca tea revived me. All in all, it was a great day.

Monday, July 19 by Cynthia Hoetzer

A sunny day, blue sky again! I am in the lobby looking out at the Uros Islands and the Island of Taquile where we were yesterday. We left for the town of Lampa and the Chullpas of Sillustani by way of the city of Juliaca – a very desolate, poor looking place. Lampa is where Marcela’s family farm was. It was a small, very clean town with a nice little plaza and a lovely church. We went inside and saw a replica of the Pieta – only 1 of 2 in the world, the other being in Lima. There was also a tomb (on top of which the Pieta sits) into which you can look and see several hundred skulls and skeletons of very important people from the town. The man who had this built was a friend of Marcela’s father and paid $500,000 to be allowed to make a mold of the original Pieta. After this, some of us took a tricycle taxi ride (1 sol) through town to the outskirts where we visited a chinchilla farm – 85 chinchillas sell for $150 USA a pelt – they can have 2 litters a year and only the males are used for coats. The females have collars and cannot leave their cages – the males travel from cage to cage.

From Lampa we headed to the Chullpas of Sillustani again by way of Juliaca where Marcela bought the makings of a picnic lunch for us. At Sillustani, we ate and then had a tour of the funerary towers built by the Aymara who eventually became the southern branch of the Inca. The predecessors of the Inca first built these towers, then the later people made the same structures a bit more sophisticated and eventually the Inca did the same yet in a much more impressive fashion. They are circular in shape and wider at the top to
allow more light in. Inside there were mummies. The towers were built at 3 levels at this site indicating class structure – lower class = lower level (many more mummies were found below).

Marcela’s family owned 10,000 hectares (24710 acres) of land here, but in 1968 the agrarian military reform took it away and gave it to the 20 families who worked it. They also took the 150 hectare farm from her family, but her father sued the government because they did not give it to the workers of the land; instead they gave it to the military, so he sued and after 12 years, he finally won it back.

This whole site is on Lake Umayo, which means, “brings water” and by some is thought to be the site of the lost city of Atlantis (according to the guide). On the climb down we saw a baby vicuna – identified by its longer neck and huge eyes (different from a llama, alpaca, and guanaco).

On the way back to the hotel we stopped at a place where a family opens their home to tourists. There we saw llamas and alpacas and tasted 2 varieties of potatoes (one called oca). The potatoes were cooked over llama dung fire, and we dipped them in a clay mixture before tasting – very yummy, very sweet.

That’s it for our last day in Puno – some colorful, tasty drinks called “Islas Esteves” made with peach liqueur, rum and orange juice, a nice meal, and a relaxing evening in the lobby by the fire. Tomorrow we travel back to sea level first then to Lima and then on to Buenos Aires.

**Tuesday, July 20 by Janet Miller**

Today we return to Lima. We again eat a wonderful breakfast in the hotel restaurant. Before leaving the hotel room, I open the curtains to again marvel at the beauty of Lake Titicaca. It is truly a sight I will always remember: the calmness of the water in the morning and the choppy waves of the water in the evening.

Even though we will be taking a domestic flight, we leave the hotel three hours before our flight is to leave. This ends up being a good thing. Before we reach Juliaca, the police stop our bus to check the bus driver’s license. Once we enter into the town, traffic is stalled due to a truck, with its tire hanging off the road into a ditch, being pulled back on the road by a bulldozer.

Our trip to the airport on the other side of Juliaca takes us over an hour (almost an hour and a half). We are, however, being entertained by the coca leaf readings that Silva, our tour guide, is giving to some members of our group. Janelle is the only one who very surprisingly shares with the rest of the group what the coca leaves reveal. The most interesting part is that she will have three children.

We finally arrive at the airport, check our luggage, and prepare to board our 11:25am flight. Although we are excited about returning to Lima and looking forward to going to Argentina, some of us are somewhat sad to think that soon we will be leaving Peru in a few hours.

We arrive back in Lima later that we had hoped. We return to the Hotel Sol de Oro. We are given rooms to use to fresh up, to rest, and to repack our luggage if necessary.

Cindy, Darlene, Sharmon, Julia, and I decide to go to the Banco Continental to cash our reimbursement checks. This was a very different experience. We are given a number and must wait for it to appear on a screen to receive service. We are all very anxious and must demonstrate patience as we wait with the Peruvian customers who are also waiting to be served.

After our checks are cashed at the bank, we decide to grab a burger at Bembo’s (the Peruvian fast-food restaurant similar to the American McDonald’s). We quickly visit a souvenir shop on our way back to the hotel. I am able to then say good-bye to the shop’s salesclerks who have been so kind to me every time I have gone into the shop. These young girls have been very interested in learning about our group and our association with the Fulbright program.

At 7:00 p.m., we attend a farewell reception in the hotel. Henry Harmon and the Fulbright Commission staff bid us good-bye with the same warmth and kindness they gave us upon our arrival in Peru. Miryam and Carmen, our guides in Lima, also come to say good-bye with hugs and kisses.
As we are riding on the bus to the airport, I see a sign that reads “Lleva al Perú en tu corazón”. This is how I truly feel. I will always carry Peru in my heart.

ARGENTINA

Wednesday, July 21 by Katherine Carson  Buenos Aires

We departed Lima for Buenos Aires just after midnight, arriving in Buenos Aires around 6 am. After settling in at the hotel, the focus for most people was sleep, food, and laundry - not necessarily in that order. Towards the end of the day, priorities shifted to include exploring the town and ice cream. The day concluded with a reception at the Hotel Amerian, where we met other members of the Argentine Fulbright Commission as well as former Fulbrighters.

A view from the Amerian Hotel-----

Thursday, July 22 by Brenna McCoy

We’ve officially begun the second half of our South American Adventure!!! We arrived in Buenos Aires yesterday, and today, after meeting Vivian (our project advisor) and discussing our projects, we had a bus tour of the city. I LOVE Buenos Aires! It feels so familiar to me … I adore the architecture and the way it is organized. Our tour was very entertaining, thanks to Silvia, our guide. We visited many of the different barrios of the city – La Boca was one of my favorites. Anne, Kate and I had a great time shopping at the little flea market they had there. Silvia said that all the houses that were of Spanish descent were destroyed and rebuilt with French architecture. So no colonial houses are here. It is apparent that there aren’t a lot of traffic lights here. It appears as if it’s a free for all at many intersections—a big game of chicken the guide said.
For me the oddest part of the day was our visit to La Recoleta – the cemetery where Evita is buried. The tombs all have above ground alters and the entire place was very ornate. I guess I expected Evita’s tomb to be huge and more like a separate memorial. It, however, is right, smack in the middle of the cemetery and if Silvia hadn’t pointed it out, I never would have been able to find it. It was modest and relatively simple. It was amusing to have a tour of the cemetery, mostly because a group of teenagers joined our group and seemed to be vastly amused by us, all in a pack. I have grand hopes for this phase of the trip and look forward to seeing more of Buenos Aires.

Friday, el 23 de julio by Anne Gaspers

Today was a pretty relaxed day in Buenos Aires. We had three different lectures during the morning. One was on the history and current state of politics in Argentina; one on the prehistoric peoples of South America; and one on art in public places, mainly including monuments and statues. After that, we were on our own until the evening. Brenna and I (and many others) went to the children's book fair where we stocked up on classroom materials and even got a book signed by a famous Spanish author.

Clive, Arifeen, Kate, and Darlene visited Mario Brodersohn, former Vice Minister of Economy, who said: the picaderos (picketers) that we would see if we visited Plaza de Mayo are “supported by the government, but are against the government!” He also said that Argentina has: 1) The best natural resources, 2) The best minerals, and 3) The best agricultural land. “The best of all of these are in Argentina, and to balance things out, God put Argentine people here.” More than half the people in Argentina live in poverty. Argentina received immigrants from more agrarian areas (East Europe and Russia) than did the U.S., thus they were poorly trained people. Argentina is used to instability, he said, and therefore it does not look like a country that had such a huge crisis (although at night we saw people digging though garbage, even recovering paper to sell for recycling.) The U.S. pressured Argentina to move to a market economy. The major argument for privatization of business was so that the government could concentrate on education, science, and health (but it did not work). Brazil and Chile were more careful when privatizing, but Argentina’s mistake was privatizing by selling Argentina’s companies, banks (only 3 or 4 in country), etc. to foreigners. The telephone company, for instance, went from a government monopoly to a private European monopoly. These owners are now major lobbyists with connections to the current government and political parties. There is much political corruption. The Latin American problem is not inflation, but unemployment (20 percent), and unequal distribution of income. There is no unemployment insurance here. Sixty percent of the people do not have a pension. There is a lack of good government services. The University is free, but as Mario says, “you get what you pay for!” Argentina, he says, was inefficient before the huge debt and are even worse now.

Mario says the Argentine people criticize the IMF behavior of the 90s because they supported the Argentine economic policy. It was Right-wing economics. Now the Left wingers are blaming the Right wingers for the economic crisis (Reagonomics ya think?)

As evening turned into night, and the rain started pouring down even harder, we started off to 'El Viejo Almacén' for a tango show. It was definitely an interesting experience. The champagne was flowing freely as we waited for the show to start. We knew it was a "tourist" show when the over-eager photographer asked to take our picture. Once the show started, we were all captivated by the glitz and glam of the costumes and what I term as the "flying-leg" syndrome. And of course the gravity-defying silicon! Although the show wasn't what I expected, I was truly entranced by the amazing athleticism and speed of the dancers. The musicians were incredible. Sometimes I just closed my eyes to capture the sultry rhythms and sounds of the music. The band included piano, bass violin, 2 accordians, 2 violins. Aside from the music and dancing, another highlight was doña Virginia...la Estrella de Buenos Aires. She was definitely a show girl once upon a time.
The evening took another twist when the audience was invited to sing along with the Julio Iglesias sound-alike. We were pleasantly surprised when Marcela chimed in with a sparkle in her eyes. But the true anomaly of the evening was, when out of the back came the sounds of Puno. Yes, that's right, the musical talents of the altiplano reached us in the tango salon of Buenos Aires. The musicianship was truly some of the best playing we've heard this side of the Andes. All in all it was a very warm and cozy evening. It was definitely "a vertical expression of a horizontal desire" as Jorge Luis Borges said (and Cindy reminded us). Or as Dr. D. the sexy hunk said on the bus at the evening's end, "it's a wordless conversation between two bodies." Or was that Shakespeare?

Saturday, July 24 by Janet Miller

Today we spend our first day outside of the city of Buenos Aires. Laura, who works at the Fulbright Commission, accompanies us on this trip. A one hour bus ride takes us to the town of San Antonio de Areco located in the province of Buenos Aires. Here we visit the Draghi Museum. Draghi has crafted silver for the last 42 years. Most of the silver crafts in the museum represent the life of the gaucho. Display cases hold knives that are either very ornate like those of the Pampas or plain (simple) like those of Porteñian influence. Several ‘gaucho’ belts are also on display. These belts are adorned with coins to show the gaucho’s prosperity. Beautiful silver accessories weighing about 40 kilos can be seen on wooden stands. Horses wear these only on special holidays. In the back of the museum we see men making silver crafts. Our guide explains that it takes 950C to melt silver. Copper is added depending on what is being made. The more copper an object has in it the more likely it will tarnish.

Our next stop is the “Museo de Ricardo Guiraldes”. This museum was founded and built by the local government in honor of Ricardo Guiraldes. Guiraldes wrote the classic Argentine novel “Don Segundo Sombra”. The museum is filled with Guiraldes’ literary works, his personal belongings and examples of his brother’s artwork. According to the museum brochure, it “shows different things about the gaucho, his way of living, traditions, habits, goods and the way in which they helped in the development of the country.”
After leaving the museum, we are to visit the estancia “El Ombú de Areco”. Because of heavy rains the night before our bus driver decides that the dirt road that would take us to the estancia is impassable. The foreman of the estancia drives out in his 4 x 4 pick-up truck to transport us (in small groups) to the estancia. While some of the group climb into the truck, Julia, Cindy, and I have to ride on the bed of the truck. Luckily, it is covered with a camper so that we don’t get muddy as the truck slips and slides its way to the estancia. Julia, Cindy, and I laughed hysterically. When we stopped, the foreman helped us get out of the back of the truck. My jacket is covered in dust. The foreman tells me it is covered with “la tierra de la pampa.”

While at the estancia, many members of our group decide to go horseback riding to see the pampas. A gaucho and his children accompany the group. The gaucho’s father was the source of inspiration for Guiraldes’ novel “Don Segundo Sombra.”

Upon our return to the estancia, we eat a fantastic lunch of salad, potatoes, sausage, carrots, and of course, grilled beef. After lunch, some members of the group decided to go horseback riding again. Others choose to lie on the grass and take naps. Others choose to sit and watch the parrots fly in and out of the “ombú”, a kind of tree that can be seen throughout the pampas.

Due to some miscommunication with the bus driver, we stay at the estancia until almost 6:30 in the evening. As we wait for the driver, we are treated to some wonderful “pastelillos” (donut-like pastries) and yerba maté. Yerba maté is a tea that drunk from a ‘bombilla’ (a cup made from a gourd) and is sipped through a metal straw.

Overall, the day is a very relaxing and peaceful one.

**Sunday, July 25 by Kathleen Harris    Iguazú Falls – 5,000 daily visitors**

Alejandro said, "Four words: tectonic plates, eroding away." This explains why Iguazu Falls exist. Amateur geologist, I like the idea of a pithy explanation for an extraordinary landscape: easy to remember, more
plausible as you try to pass it off on someone else. But then how are these falls different from other ones like Niagara or Victoria? "Basalt," he said. Even fewer words. That's better. Basalt is a word I enjoy saying, randomly usually, but it's good to know that at least Alejandro would agree with me if I said that the reason Iguazu Falls formed -- are being formed since the enormous force of the water is constantly reforming the falls -- has to do with the predominant composition of the rock, basalt as opposed to Niagara's limestone or Victoria's granite. Five words total: that's probably enough.

From the patio beyond the bar at the Sheraton, we can both keep an eye on the ageless process of erosion and hear the soccer match on the TV inside. Darlene tells us a joke, the crowd roars, we have a cause-and-effect problem, but it's hypothermia I have on my mind. After an afternoon of rambling around the cantilevered observation walkways around the falls and, in my case, asking Alejandro geeky questions, we'd been taken by jungle truck to the Kodiak boats. A couple of days ago, back at the estancia, when we told people we were going to Iguazu, they said, "Oh, the Kodiak boats." It was a tease, but as we were loaded onto the boats in our flimsy ponchos, it was becoming clear that this boat ride was going to be an up close and personal experience with plenty of water. The crew of the boat did their best to be comedic, offering a tiny dry towel or a toy paddle as their routine progressed, and the captain steered a course that was either really fast and at an extreme torque or straight into the waft of fog and mist around the base of the falls, dunking us in cold, cold water. I think someone might have been videotaping us in hopes of selling the ultimate self-referential souvenir. Although I consider myself too cool to buy such a tape, I do hear myself screaming as if on a roller coaster most of the way through the dunking.

Finally it was too cold on the patio to do anything except shiver, too dark to see anything, but you could still hear the falls.

**Monday, July 26 by Julia Durand**

After a good night’s rest, we met in the business center or at breakfast. Like insects in our green ponchos, we found ourselves walking to the Garganta Del Diablo. Would we get another shower or just a mist? Lovelier than Niagara Falls, shorter than Victoria Falls, Iguazu would be a long held memory.

As we left the catwalk some of us spotted the rubber boats along the river. Like a good Fulbright representative, Belen advised us, "I know nothing about these boats, if they are safe." Still the excitement was building. Ten of us set off, life preservers were on, unlike in Lake Titicaca! We floated gently down the river.

Could we pretend we were on the Amazon since our trip to Iquitos didn't work out? We saw toucans and alligators. Everyone was commending our decision to go until we saw how close we were to the falls. Skillfully our guide maneuvered and we floated safely to the main train.

Others walked that day. Shopping called some, food others. At 2:00 we began our long afternoon to Salta. Belen, with the help of a willing Aerolineas Argentinas representative, quickly guided us through the airport. We walked to the gate and onto the planes just minutes to take off. Would our luggage follow?

**Tuesday, July 27 by George Chu Salta**

After arriving at the Hotel Presidente with its somewhat jaded art deco lobby furniture on Monday evening, Iguazued Fulbrighters suppressed a few yawns as they returned to the classroom for lectures at the Salta Cultural Center on Tuesday morning.

Mabel Mamani began with the pre-colonial history of the area, giving a substantial power-point presentation with excellent photos. Salta province borders Chile to the west (across the Andes), and Bolivia and Peru to the north. There are about a million residents, half of whom live in the city of Salta, which is a happening place for culture.

Ms. Mamani identified three eras before the Incas conquered the area in 1430. She gave examples of the agriculture and pottery of these civilizations, and hinted at the connections to the Tiahuanaco (now in Bolivia, east of Lake Titicaca). The Cacan language of the Quilmes has unfortunately been lost, but Wichi survives. Quechua was imported from the northwest with the conquering Incas, known as the 'Tawantinsuyo.' Their road system was used in the labor tribute that was due to the empire, and whole communities were moved to serve as soldiers, herders, farmers, or craftsmen.

The Inca Empire lasted until 1536 when the Spaniards came. At the volcano Llullaillaco (about 20,000 feet above sea level), three well-preserved Inca mummies were discovered in 1999, including the Ice Maiden.
Wednesday, July 28 by Sharmon Hagler

As we boarded the bus to head south of Salta, little did we realize that today we would be experiencing Argentina scenery at its best. Traveling through the countryside, our “small” bus entered an area known for its microclimates. A variety of crops; tobacco, alfalfa, olives, fruit trees, and pecans, dotted the countryside. This area, currently very dry and arid, is the source of daily afternoon rains from December to March. Flooding becomes a problem. Seventy-five percent of Argentina tobacco is grown in this area...cigarette manufacturing is an important industry. Another interesting fact concerns the hiding of Nazi war criminals in this area.

After a “pit” stop at Panador Posta De las Cabras, a small café noted for its goat cheese and strudel, we continued our journey to the mountain area. We were in awe of the beauty of the landscape. The colors flowed from one mountain to another…the reds (iron) and blue-green (copper) hues reminded us of the rich mineral composition of the mountains. The scenery seemed to be a combination of the American Badlands, Grand Canyon, Sedona, and Utah landscape. Sixty thousand years ago the entire area was under water. The current mountains began their movement 30,000 years ago. Numerous empty houses dotted the countryside. Since many “hippies” inhabit the area, these houses are used as temporary lodging. Eager for a minute to stretch our legs, the bus stopped at the Devil’s Throat in Las Conchas Canyon. And stretch many Fulbrighters did!!! Several members climbed the landmark. Others browsed among the hippie and native crafts. The beautiful jewelry and pottery was hard to resist!!! A few miles down the road, we visited the natural amphitheater. It was fun to sing “Happy Birthday” to Anne. After our serenade, a flutist played his birthday greeting!! It was such a beautiful sound!!!

Continuing on our journey, we passed other landmarks: three crosses (legend states that three priests were killed at the site during colonial times, Casa de Loros—the house of parrots (thousand of holes doted the mountains as a returning spot each night for the parrots—many of which are now exported due to the nuisance of their eating grapes), and a natural site that we called the ship!!!

We continued our journey, passing many trees imported from Israel to help prevent erosion from drying winds which blocked the roads. Arriving in Cafayate, we scoped a neat little restaurant for lunch. This area is known for its many wineries. After lunch, the group toured the wine cellar of Eckhart winery. Eckhart, the highest altitude vineyard in the world, produces a million liters of wine yearly. Only 25 percent is exported. Cafayate is the best wine-making center in the region because or its sunny climate and its soil, which has huge concentrations of minerals ideal for growing grapes. They are famous for Torrontes wine. I thought it very interesting that the grape “waste” is recycled into fertilizer for the winery.

After a sample of wine, we headed to the Quilmes Ruins. It is hard to believe that this desolate land was one time a fertile valley. From 400 BC to 1600 AD, the Incan inhabited this area. All that remains of this civilization were the foundations of the homes, silos, and community buildings. Cactus was used for roofing. The worship of the moon was important to the civilization. It was a basic belief that when the moon, woman, and harvest combined, the community was living in harmony. Thus, crops were planted in the growth of the moon and were cultivated outside the village. Water was “piped” to the community from canals stretching 7 kilometers. It was used for irrigation and consumption. The inhabitants of the valley exchanged their food for the tools and textiles of the mountain people. Salt was used as money. It became a symbol of abundance of the village. After the Spaniard conquest, all customs, beliefs, and language were erased. Descendants today are trying to re-teach the language to the youth.

This group of Fulbrighters, tired and hungry after a very long but eventful day, pulled into Salta very late in the evening. Today’s adventure left us in awe. Tomorrow is a new day, another great adventure.

Thursday, July 29 by Janelle Bondor

Our delicious food demonstration began with a description of the relaxed, easy-going people of Salta. Marisa de Borigen emphasized how family-oriented many people are and how the preparation of food is often a sign of affection. The ceremony of cooking is taken seriously — and honored with the siesta. People take time to appreciate good food and our host credits this with reenergizing “spirit of Saltaños”.

Many desserts have been influenced by Spanish cuisine and other foods are local. She discussed foods that have been passed down from generation to generation: maize, chichi, polenta, figs, nuts, dried peaches,
cayote (squash like spaghetti). Surprisingly, Salta has a large avocado production. Yellow and white maize is a healthy staple, especially for poor families. The miracle prescription for good health and intelligence -- 4 almonds a day! (The trick is not indulging in 5 or 6 or 50 a day!)

We sniffed a combination of leaves & anise that is used for a digestive tea. Of course, another important tea is the coca variety. It is legal to possess coca, but illegal to sell it. Most coca sold in Salta comes from Bolivia and our host recommends it as a sore throat remedy. Among the tasty dishes we sampled were: papas con queso and tamales filled with meat, onions, cheese and eggs.

Instructions for the potatoes and cheese:

Cook potato with skin

I think the next ingredients were for the breading (?):

½ kilo of flour
1/2 teaspoon of baking soda
Dash of salt
Oregano
1 or 2 eggs
- stir ’til creamy and add water
- chill for 1 hour
- skin potatoes; add salt
- use a good cheese that is creamy
- fry with a little oil

Friday, July 30 by Michelle Barclay

Purmamarca, Jujuy

Salta, known as “Salta the beautiful”, is the most seductive and largest town in the northwest and is located in Lerma Valley. It is a contrast of old colonial buildings and modern architecture. On Friday, we left Salta and drove through the Quebrada de Humahuaca Valley. This valley has been used for 10,000 years as an important passage for transporting both people and ideas between the Andean highlands and the plains below. We traveled from the largest city in northern Argentina to Purmamarca, a tiny dusty village of adobe houses and approximately 250 inhabitants. The striking Cerro de los Siete Colores (Hill of Seven Colors) towers behind the old adobe church. Local vendors sell wood carvings and a variety of crafts around the shady local square. We had the pleasure of staying at the Hotel El Manantial del Silencio, a Spanish style hotel, located at the base of Cerro de los Siete Colores.

Saturday, July 31 by Arifeen Daneshyar

In the tiny village of Purmamarca, shopping -- wood carvings, hand-woven carpets, and jackets -- in the shady square was the main event for the shoppers in the Fulbright contingent. Never to be left behind, I bought myself an Indian jacket. It was a bargain: $20 for a handsome, warm, jacket. But there was a problem; its zipper worked erratically. I had to live with my zipper problem for the rest of the trip. The lunch at a local restaurant, under the shade of a tree, with Clive, Kathleen, and Jeannie, was scrumptious and inexpensive. I yielded to my cravings for something sweet and stopped at an ice cream parlor -- a big mistake, because I acquired an addiction for ice cream that haunted me for the rest of sojourn.

In the afternoon, I walked around Cerro de los Siete Colores (Hill of the Seven Colors) by myself and admired their rugged beauty. I needed that solitude! An hour into my hike, a taxi stopped by my side. Jeannie offered me a ride to the village. El Manantial del Silencio, a quaint boutique hotel, was not exactly the quietest place. A dog (deserved to be shot) barked for the longest time in the morning. I wonder if it was the same dog that bit Clive the next day.

Anthropologist Maria Parado was an intelligent woman. Educated in the United States and fluent in English, she was pessimistic about Argentina's future. Corruption (mostly in the upper class) is endemic and rampant in her country, a problem which, in her opinion, will always plague Argentinean politics. She was also pessimistic about education, which is not on the priority list of contemporary leaders. In this rural area there are no books, no chalk, no window frames in the schools. Children here are in school one week and then home two weeks with projects. The teachers go to their homes during these two weeks but do not get paid any extra. They earn 250 pesos ($83)/month to teach but many have not been paid for the past few
months due to no money in the government. Committed to life and work in Argentina, Maria never wanted to live in the United States. It was refreshing to talk to somebody as candid as Maria.

Excerpt from Darlene Voeltz
While some hiked the hills in this beautiful countryside, Marcela, Janet, George, Darlene, and Jeanne returned to the little village to interview the guide, Maria. She talked about the dry season (this time of year in June, July, August), when the riverbed is arid, yet this same riverbed floods the town during the rainy season. In October there is much thunder and lightning, but the rains don’t start until November.

Her family moved to North Carolina from 1977-1984 during the military dictatorship. They left Argentina with only the clothes on their back. Her father was a University teacher and his phone number was on the WRONG list, so they were in danger. University professors were being killed or came up “missing.” Some universities closed down, especially if they were “left wingers.” Dictatorship was taking over. The military entered their home. An alert neighbor lady saw the military enter and went to the local market to inform Maria’s mother who had gone there shopping. She called her husband at work, and they sent Grandma to go to the school to pick up Maria. They stayed in Uruguay for one week while waiting for tickets to America. While they had been part of the middle class and quite affluent prior to the military take over, it is apparent now that Maria and her family are indeed in the lower class and struggling to make a living. The military dictatorship was a shock to the middle class and most of the nation is now in the lower class, she stated. There has been a return to Peronism with no current attempt for a new political party.

From 1989-1999 Carlos Menem was president of Argentina. He privatized most of the industry by selling them. Funny thing, though, he kept most of the money!! So now privatization is not a favorable topic because of its negative effects! Many of the companies went bankrupt; and there is virtually no money in
the Argentine treasury, so they are unable to pay on their loans from the IMF. Maria is very concerned about Argentines getting government support (we call it welfare). Any resident/family can get 150 pesos ($50). There is no incentive to work. Hmmmm... "end welfare as we know it?"—would this work here?

The wonderful eco-sites that we visited are owned by the University of Buenos Aires, but due to lack of funding, they have not had restoration since 1930/40.

Maria is working with grandmothers of the disappeared who are archiving (without funding) friends’ and neighbors’ interviews to give the children (now in their 20s and 30s) of the MISSING some ideas of what their parents are like. The 30,000 who went MISSING actually wiped out most of a generation. Some were sent to concentration or extermination camps, never to be heard from again. Some were taken up in airplanes, drugged, and then dropped into the Atlantic. Five hundred children are still not identified, but 77 have been found (mostly in military families from the dictatorship era.) There is a book about this: Nunca Más and also a video: The Official Story. Thursdays at 3 p.m. the women of Buenos Aires (mainly grandmothers since the mothers went MISSING), still circle the Plaza de Mayo to mourn the missing/dead.

Afternoon tea at the house of Laura Vilte, a school principal and psychologist, was an enlightening affair. Ms. Vilte, who laid a generous table of pastries and fruit, was obviously proud of her elegant home. She talked passionately about the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, the grandmothers/mothers of those who disappeared during the "dirty war." Laura’s sister was a teacher’s union leader and was one of the desaparecidos (disappeared). Union leaders went missing all over the country went MISSING. From this province alone 118 people went MISSING. Children of the MISSING were often sold to military personnel. Laura tells of one lady from the province who lost her entire family. She was tortured herself in a concentration camp. She said the bishop of the area witnessed it all. Families today are told to FORGET IT!! But as Laura states, “How can history be built with no past?”

Laura held our attention with her emotional narration of the atrocities of that period, telling of how they have lost some of their culture. Children are suffering from malnutrition. The government gives the school 50 cents for each child to eat breakfast AND lunch. The rest comes from donations. Very little money is available for books. The elementary school in this area of Jujuy meets from 8:30 – 1 and the secondary school is the afternoon. Young people are drinking and having babies. Alcoholism is “very sad.” There are no jobs. There is domestic violence. She reminded us of the U.S. involvement. Our army “School of the Americas” is a combat training school for Latin American soldiers, located at Fort Benning, Georgia, and it trained Latin American soldiers in combat torture techniques. The theory was that military dictatorship was better than the threat of communism. The School of the Americas, has been frequently dubbed the School of Assassins. “Among those targeted by SOA graduates are educators, union organizers, religious workers, student leaders, and others who work for the rights of the poor. Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, raped, assassinated, “disappeared,” massacred, and forced into refugee by those trained at the School of Assassins”(http://www.soaw.org/new/type.php?type=8).

Laura offered some hope, indicating that pride is reappearing.

**Sunday, August 1 by Cynthia Hoetzer  Córdoba**

Today was a day of travel. Highlights were as follows:

Went for a walk starting in town and heading through the cemetery, looping around through the colorful mountainside, and back to the hotel. A stray dog bit Clive while he was jogging early this AM (full moon, town full of dogs in heat). Jeanne held a Pachamama ceremony this morning, as today is the celebration of Pachamama. We went to the airport and learned that our flight was delayed in Jujuy (allowing Clive to get to the hospital and back just in a nick of time for the first in a series of rabies shots). We took over the airport lounge, ate sandwiches, drank beer, read, and played cards. Arrived in Córdoba tonight. Luckily, our hotel was directly across from a place where we could get our daily dose of ice cream and not far from a 24-hour laundry.

**Monday, August 2 by Kate Carson**
The day began with a visit to the Biblioteca Mayor (Main Library) of the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. The library was established in 1818, although the oldest books are part of a collection brought to Argentina by the Jesuits in 1777. The library is the oldest in Argentina. It contains over 150,000 volumes, including many old and rare books, first and last editions. One book of interest was an Atlas written for the dauphin (prince) of Louis XIV. Since 1960, the library’s collection has focused on the social sciences. More information about the library is at: www.bmayor.unc.edu.ar.

We first visited the special collection of Dalmacio Velez Sársfield. Sarsfield was a member of the Faculty of Law and Social Science. He contributed to the writing of the Argentine constitution, and was the author of the country’s civil code. The collection of 2000 texts contains both books that he wrote and the books from his personal collection. We next visited the university museum. Founded in 1610 by the Jesuits, it is the oldest in Argentina and the third oldest in South America.

The part of Cordoba where the university is located is called the Jesuit block and consists of three parts: the Jesuit church, the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, and the Colegio Monserat (founded). Among other items, the museum contained an edition of the Bible written in 7 languages - one of 10 in the world, and a collection of scientific equipment from the turn of the last century. Lastly, we toured the church. Construction of the church was completed in 1674. The roof is interesting because it is constructed of cedar from Paraguay, and is shaped like an inverted keel (i.e. - an upside-down boat). The decorations on the ceiling are in red, green, and gold. The red color comes from local minerals, the green from local flora, and the gold is gold leaf. The altar piece of wood was carved by the Guarani. We also visited the "Indian chapel," which is of Italian design from the Medici period. The Jesuit chapel, which was part of the home of the monks, was the model for the larger church. It was completed in 1668. All of the materials used in the construction of this chapel are from Argentina. The ceiling, which is original to the building, was painted by the local indigenous peoples. The chapel contains two paintings by Genarro Perez, an important 19th century Cordoba artist. One painting is of St. Peter, the other of St. Augustine.

After lunch we visited the Colegio Monserat, which is still a functioning high school. The colegio was founded 50 years after the founding of the university. Although it is a public school, students must take an entrance exam. About 1000 students apply each year for 250 slots. 1800 students attend the school - 900 in the morning session and 900 in the afternoon. The morning session runs from 7:15 am - 1:15 pm. It consists of eight 40-minute periods with 5 minute passing periods. The afternoon session is from 1:30-7:30 pm. It has the same structure (eight 40 minute periods) as the morning session. Students may first apply to attend the school at age 10. They may not be admitted after age 13 because they will be too far behind the other students. They study a classics-based curriculum which includes Latin, Greek, History, Chemistry, and Math. There are 300 faculty members and 30-31 students per class.

This school is unique in that its funding comes from the university. Students are required to buy their own books, although many teachers author their own texts due to the uniqueness of the curriculum. This has the added advantage of lowering the costs to the students. About 85% of the students go on to study at university. About half the group got the opportunity to observe classes during the 4:15 session. They observed a variety of classes to include philosophy and literature, as well as a diversity of teaching styles., and appreciated the opportunity to observe the pedagogy employed in Argentine classrooms.

The day concluded with a cocktail party at the Novecento Pub in the Cabildo Historico de la Ciudad. Group members had the opportunity to converse with current and former officials from the Cordoba school system. Topics of conversation included the educational system and the effects of the 2001 economic crisis. The wine flowed constantly, and was accompanied by yummy empanadas, stew, and a scrumptious dessert.

Excerpt from Darlene Voeltz while visiting the colegio classroom:

We sat in the classroom of black iron framed desks with wooden tops which had turned black from many many coats of shellac and were creaky upon movement. There were two 8-foot fluorescent bulbs hanging in a very large classroom where there was one large window. There was an adequate chalkboard and chalk. The orange and cram colored room was cheerful in color yet sad from huge peelings of paint while the high white ceiling showed signs of stress from water leakage and the floor creaked with age. The 18 high school students were jovial, paid attention sporadically, yet whispered among themselves, displaying universal teenage behavior.
Their uniform was a navy blazer, shirt, and tie (or maybe a sweater) and mostly completed with blue jeans. The teacher was a younger female dressed in black jeans and sweater with a short red top beneath. She taught in a casual, participative manner, discussing material the students had in front of them. When too much chatter interfered with her lesson, she would gain their attention with “CHICOS!

Evening reception: I sat beside Ana, the Ministry of Education supervisor for rural middle schools. Some of her comments: Education is decentralized in her province. There was a major change in education in 1996. Students now take 13 subjects per semester in middle school and 17 in high school. Teachers earn 300 pesos per month ($100). Principals earn 850 pesos. All need to test to get into the University. No one can test out and there is no AP (Advanced Placement) like in the U.S. The University is almost free. Their students typically don’t work. Students pay 50 pesos a semester and they still complain!!!! Her schools specialize in tourism and hotel management. Tourism grew because Argentines could not afford to travel outside the country after the devaluation. Many had heard rumors of the devaluation but didn’t believe it. The top officials, however, removed their monies! GO FIGURE!! (Enron memories, anyone?)

After December 20, 2001, people could only take out 250 pesos a week. Prices inflated after the devaluation, and most families tried to get by without buying much. The currency rate changed by the hour. Restaurants did not even have prices on their menus, as prices changed (higher) from meal to meal! Ana’s mother had dollars in her bank account, but after the devaluation she received pesos = only 1/3 of the value of her account, of course. Luckily, Ana’s family had just purchased a home five months previous to the devaluation of 2001; and, therefore, didn’t have a lot of money in the bank. They paid $26,000 for it and now it’s worth $14,000 in 2004. Most people, she said, began to work 2-3 jobs to make ends meet. It is typical for someone to teach from 7-9 a.m., then work a full-time job from 10-6, and then teach again from 7-9 p.m. Argentines still do not trust their government, Ana said. This year Ana got a raise—the first time since 1977!

Ana stated that Argentines were first made at Americans as a whole when we went to war with Iraq but now realize that most of the people do not agree with Bush. They think he’s dumb! She knew about the Kerry/Edwards ticket; I found that interesting since most Americans would not have a clue who the president of Argentina (Kirchner) is, much less any candidates for office! In their past election, Ana said they voted for Kirchner just to keep Menem from getting elected once again—indicating also that they are not that happy with Kirchner either.

**Tuesday, August 3 by Robert Sitler**

While Buenos Aires clearly functions as Argentina’s nerve center, the province of Cordoba beats as its heart. Cordoba’s vibrant capital city combines with the region’s rich history and multifaceted cultural heritage to reveal vital dimensions of the nation’s soul. Today’s field trip to the neighboring town of Alta Gracia offered a glimpse into this province’s diverse character with visits to a 17th century Jesuit estate, the retirement home of the Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, and the childhood house of the famous revolutionary Ernesto “Che” Guevara, the internationally renowned icon of Cuban Communist mythology.

After a relatively short bus ride of some 36 km. to the southwest of Cordoba, we arrived at the front gate of the Residencia Estancia Jesuitica de Alta Gracia, a World Heritage Site housing the Museo Histórico Nacional Casa del Virrey Liniers. This “estancia,” or estate, was perhaps the most significant of a series of sites used by the Jesuit order as part of a system of agricultural ventures functioning in support of its various missionary activities, particularly those among the indigenous Guaraní. This particular one had been donated to the order in 1643 when a descendant of the original owners named Alonso Nieto de Herrera joined the Jesuits and donated his inherited property for their use.

One could not help but reflect upon the diversity of human activities and experiences that had taken place there over the centuries. The area’s original inhabitants are now called Comechingones (apologies to those familiar with Mexican Spanish in which this term could be taken as a rather bizarre variant of the verb “chingar”). Like many native groups in the Americas, these people were small scale agronomists focused on corn and an extensive variety of crops that included squash and potatoes. They were a shamanic society that held special reverence for the sun and moon. With the arrival of the Spanish invaders, the lands and its native inhabitants were awarded to a conquistador named Juan Nieto. The captive Indians, who were no doubt decimated by European diseases, were supplemented by large numbers of slaves brought in chains from Africa. While one might expect descendants of these slaves to be still living in the Alta Gracia area, the Africans were later used as cannon fodder during Argentine military struggles and their once vital
presence here has been virtually erased. While the raising and slaughter of cattle for hides and food was the dominant activity on the estate, corn was grown for grinding in the stone mill built alongside the artificial reservoir behind the estancia. The raising of mules for sale and textile productions were also important aspects of life on the estancia. After the Society of Jesus was expelled from the Americas by the Spanish crown in 1777, the estate passed into private hands, including those of a former viceroy of the Plata region named Santiago de Liniers, a man who was a hero in the early 19th century battles against British invaders and whose upper class lifestyle added a touch of luxury to the original humility of the site.

One of the more intriguing features of the museum was its latrine system, a two-story affair in which wastes dropped behind a stone partition into a flowing aqueduct with water brought down from the so-called “tajamar” behind the site. While the upstairs “toilets” included relatively cozy wooden seats for the monks and estate owners, the crude stone holes and rough rock ledges for “seating” in the lower latrine area suggest that its use was for slaves, Indians and others at the lower end in the rigid social order of the colonial period. Other interesting items in the museum included an extensive collection of carob wood furniture, a non-ornamental set of “boleadoras” (the throwing balls used to hunt game and entangle the legs of stray cattle), a cooking pot made from the dried udder of a cow with the teats functioning as the vessel’s legs and a lighting device called a cornucopia which consisted of a mirror and elaborate silver frame that reflected and magnified the glow of two candles set in from of it.

Our next stop was the retirement home of Manuel de Falla (1876-1946), the great Spanish composer known locally as “el maestro.” His house was named “Los Espinillos,” a reference to the spiny bushes scattered about the yard in this obviously affluent neighborhood. Falla was a close friend of Federico García Lorca, the internationally famed Spanish poet and dramatist. Falla wrote operatic works as well as ballet and orchestral pieces. Although he was not particularly political, he eventually fled Civil War Spain and took up residence in Argentina, moving in 1942 to the house in Alta Gracia where he would die four years later.

Our last visit of the day was to the childhood home of Ernesto “Che” Guevara. Che has been one of my personal heroes since adolescence and I couldn’t help but feel fortunate to have an opportunity to better remember this extraordinary man. Che lived in this house between the ages of 4 and 16 but the middle class home contains almost nothing in terms of personal effects. Most of his memorabilia and surviving family members as well as his recently exhumed body, are now at “home” in Cuba, his adopted “patria.” For me, the most moving part of the modest exhibit here was a letter written by Ernesto to his parents from Bolivia shortly before being executed by Bolivian military forces in 1967. The humility and his sincerity of Che’s loving words to his parents brought tears to my eyes and further confirmed my vision of this individual as a being of exceptional depth and capacity for love.

Even many of the enemies of Castro’s revolution admire Ernest Guevara and his exemplary life. Trained as a medical doctor, Che personally witnessed the C.I.A.-sponsored military coup that toppled the civilian reformist government of Guatemala in 1954 that led to decades of severe oppression at the hands of U.S-backed murderous generals. His disgust with American hubris led him quite naturally into an alliance with Fidel Castro whom he met while traveling in Mexico. Che’s story is well known after this point. He stands apart from other government leaders around the world as one who is actually willing to do physical work with the common people, one willing to put the needs and hopes of others above his own, and one willing to sacrifice his own life for the sake of others.

I remember as an adolescent seeing the photos of the bullet-ridden body of this unusual man surrounded by smiling faces and wondering to myself how human beings would take pleasure in the brutal death of another. Only later would I come to understand my own government’s involvement in such inhumane acts in Vietnam, Guatemala, Cambodia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Iran, Chile, Iraq, Laos and elsewhere around the globe. I am humbled by the life of a man willing to take a stand against such depravity and to move beyond words to concrete action.

Che is physically dead. Gabriela, the young tour guide accompanying our group, admitted that no one she knows really is even vaguely aware of his idealistic life or even cares who he was or what he represented. Che envisioned a “new man” (excuse the sexist terminology) whose life would find fulfillment in the liberation and wellbeing of others. The 1967 photo of his bloody corpse points to the late 20th century rise of a global consumerism now so pervasive and normalized that it is virtually invisible to the cultural
mainstream. One can only hope that a few open-hearted souls remain among us to take up Che’s work in future generations. They may remember the words most associated with this remarkable human being:

“HASTA LA VICTORIA SIEMPRE”

After leaving the Guevara home, we went and ate a variety of grilled meats and assorted animal parts at a roadside restaurant leading out of Alta Gracia towards Cordoba. Many voted this the worst lunch of the trip—after all we are not used to blood sausage, kidneys, stomach lining, and pork rinds.

**Wednesday, August 4 by Brenna McCoy**

Today was one of those days that I wouldn’t trade for a millions dollars. We went to the suburbs of Córdoba and visited La escuela Ejercito Argentino – an elementary school. We were met warmly and in small groups were sent to visit classrooms. Sharmon, Darlene, and I were delivered to a fourth grade class where the students were working on a writing assignment. It is always amazing to me how kids are the same all over the world! They were so excited by us and so wanted to talk to us and really weren’t all that excited about their school work. I know this will shock you all, but they immediately picked up on Sharmon’s friendly personality and only wanted to get close to her!!! It was so sweet! They were enamored!

At the end of the lesson we took some pictures and then it took us a full five minutes to get out the door – there was much kissing on the cheeks, saying goodbye, asking last minute questions, etc. We enjoyed some coffee and pastries and debriefed – it seems as though we all had a good experience!

We are leaving Córdoba this evening to return to Buenos Aires. I can’t believe the end is so near!!

**Thursday, August 5 by Anne Gaspers**

Today we had two lectures. The first was about gender issues with Monique Thiteux-Altschul. She gave us a brief history of the role of women in Argentina and then we had a lively discussion about current issues and organizations for women. Then we were treated to an interesting history of the tango by Juan Raffo. He had us clapping our hands to different rhythms and listening to different styles of tango music. It was very fun and interactive. After these two lectures, we were on our own for the rest of the day. Brenna and I had scheduled a visit to the Washington School. We wanted to meet with an IB coordinator in Buenos Aires since we had done so in Lima. Our meeting went really well. We got to meet with the IB Coordinator, MYP coordinator and Director of English programs. We had an interesting exchange of ideas and information about our respective programs. They were just as curious as we were which made it fun. Something new I learned about Argentine education was that the secondary teachers don't always teach all day at one school. That's mainly because of having a specialty subject to teach. We also got to talk to six students (in English). It was a lot of fun and they had a lot of the same complaints and praises of the program that our students have. We left them with the desire to set up a pen pal exchange between our students. They even gave us gifts as we left!

Afterwards, we went to El Ateneo. It was the most beautiful bookstore I've ever spent money in. The fact that it's in an old theatre gives it a special ambience...along with all of the books of course! For dinner, Bob, Janelle, Brenna and I went to the Thai restaurant for one last time which was delicious as always! Then it was back to the hotel to re-pack for the second to last time and fill out evaluations.

Excerpt from Darlene Voeltz – many of us had coffee this evening with Carlos Gervasoni, our political science lecturer from Friday, July 23, who is going to Notre Dame in August to work on a PhD. He talked about the Argentine monetary crisis, indicating that Argentina had tied itself to the American dollar to try to stop the hyperinflation in the 80s. They were using $ anyway, so they tied the peso to the $ via a Fixed Exchange Rate. Inflation went down and it was successful for ten years. Prices stabilized. About 1999 it was becoming clear that it was no longer working. By 2001 it had to be done (the devaluation!) The main reason for the devaluation was that Argentina realized their peso was not equal to the value of the American dollar any longer. People were afraid of the devaluation, so they took money out of Argentine and invested much of it overseas. Brazil had already devalued their currency a couple years before, making their exports cheaper to the world market, so Argentina had to devalue in order to compete. On December 20, 2001, Argentines woke up to hear their currency had been devalued against the American dollar. Now it would take three pesos to equal an American dollar.
Today there is a problem between government and utility companies. Devaluation caused huge problems. There was a breakdown of the legal system. It caused +40 percent inflation in 2002, then stabilizing in 2003. Argentina now has a free floating exchanged rate rather than a fixed rate. If you had a loan, the government protected you. You had to pay what you were going to pay before the devaluation. Many people deposited their money outside the country or in real estate. The government did not protect the savers. Our interviewer, Carlos, does not put his money in the bank; he does not trust them. He is currently suing the bank for not keeping their contract to him. Salaries are exempt from the 1 percent tax on checks cashed. There is also an import/export tax. Tax collection equals 2 percent of GDP.

Carlos says, “The world is at great risk while Bush is in power. The world needs some order. Bush is perceived as illegitimate! After 9-11 there was support for the United States until two months later when Bush attacked Afghanistan and then later Iraq. Everything is at risk now.”

The Cuban revolution exacerbated the military coups in Argentina. The U.S. government supported these coups to suppress communism

**Friday, August 6 by George Chu**

Our final full day in Buenos Aires included a lecture on the educational system of Argentina by Dr. Graciela Abarca, Academic Advisor of the Argentinian Fulbright Commission, and a debriefing with Norma Gonzalez, Director of the Commission. Members of the group tried to finish up meetings with academic contacts, as well as prepare for the flight home on August 7th. The evening included a sumptuous farewell feast at La Bisteca Restaurant, hosted by Norma and her husband, Belén Vistali, and many of the staff of the Fulbright Commission.

**Saturday, August 7**

We departed from Buenos Aires in the evening for Dallas and Austin, arriving back in the United States on Sunday somewhat bleary-eyed after this phenomenal journey. The members attempted to find the fastest possible connections back home, but many did not arrive until Sunday evening. They fell into the waiting arms of their loved ones, and began to tell the story of life in South America . . .

**Chilean Postscript to the Southern Cone: August 7th-12th by Anne Gaspers**

(Brenna and Anne continued on to Chile, so we are including a brief summary of their experience.)

Our jaunt to Chile was quick, relaxing and fun! As we flew into Santiago, it was a clear day and had just snowed so we had a clear view of Aconcagua and the Andes ringing the city. My friends Annabel and Marcelo took us up to the Maipo Valley in his bright purple VW bug named "Barney". We tried to visit the Concha y Toro vineyard but it was closed for the day so we settled for empanadas and kuchen at two different roadside restaurants. That evening, we went to the Chilean film "Machuca" about the rise of the Pinochet dictatorship in the 1970s. The premise was the integration of poorer boys into an elite boys school and the friendship between two of the boys. Cindy should definitely see that one.

On Sunday, we went to the Museo de Bellas Artes and saw a great exhibit dedicated to Pablo Neruda's ‘Poemas de amor y una canción desesperada’. Our trip was kind of a "Finding Pablo" for me. We then had dinner at a place called Pollo al coñac. They brought the chicken in cognac sauce to the table in a sizzling pot and people actually drank the juice. It was very tasty!

On Monday, Brenna and I headed northwest to Valparaiso. While we were there we visited one of Pablo Neruda's three Chilean homes: La Sebastiana. It is a 5-story home made into a museum. It was amazing to be in the same place where he wrote many of his poems. We also hiked around to see the Museo al Cielo Abierto made up of around 30 different outdoor murals. Valparaiso is a very colorful city similar to La Boca in Buenos Aires. We also got to ride up and down in a couple of different street elevators. All in all, we did a lot of walking, climbing, eating and relaxing.

On Wednesday, we took the bus to La Isla Negra which is Pablo Neruda's seashore home. It is in a beautiful coastal area south of Valparaiso. Then we headed back to Santiago to have dinner with Marcelo and Annabel. Chile was definitely down time for us!