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Chile Faculty Development Trip

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Chile Faculty Development Trip

From May 16–27, 2005, eleven members of the CSB/SJU faculty carried out a study tour in Santiago, Viña del Mar, and Valparaiso, Chile. The participants included the organizers from the Latino/Latin American Studies program: Gary Prevost, Political Science; Brian Larkin, History; and Bruce Campbell and Gladys White from Spanish. Selected participants were Corey Shouse-Tourino, Spanish; Ernie Diedrich, Economics; Sandra Bot-Miller, Education; Lisa Ohm, German; Vera Theisen, French; Scott Johnson, Political Science; and John Yoakam, Social Work. The organization of the trip was carried out by two Chilean hosting organizations: Adolfo Ibañez University (UAI) in Viña del Mar/Valparaiso and the Vicaría de la Solidaridad (social justice) of the Archdiocese of Santiago. One goal of the trip was to deepen the relationship between our institutions and UAI, the new site of our Chile study abroad program. Twenty-eight CSB/SJU students were enrolled at the new site in the fall 2005 semester. In fall 2004 the first Chile program was conducted at the Universidad Austral in Valdivia, Chile.

The primary emphasis of the trip was the contemporary political, economic, and social conditions in Chile. Morning lectures were followed in most cases by afternoon field trips that related to the issues studied in the morning. The lectures were given by professors of Adolfo Ibañez University and by various researchers and social actors arranged by the archdiocese. More details on the speakers and field trips are provided later in the report.

Chile is an interesting site for our studies and for the location of our study abroad program. Located in an isolated position on the Pacific coast of Latin America, it has had a special and significantly different history, especially in the political realm. Unlike most Latin American countries, which until recently have experienced long periods of military rule, various forms of democracy were present in Chile well back into the 19th century. Indeed, Chile's long history of political democracy made the military coup of September 11, 1973, and the subsequent seventeen years of dictatorship so significant in the country's history. This period and its continuing impact today was a major theme of the program.

Since 1990 Chile has been ruled politically by three democratically elected coalition governments dominated by the Socialist and Christian Democratic parties. This government, called the Concertación, deepened a strong program of neoliberal reforms in both government and the economy begun during the years of the Pinochet dictatorship. Key features of the program include privatization of social security, health care, and higher education. The impact of these reforms has been positive in many aspects. Chile has received significant foreign investments and enjoys a healthy local business environment. Over the last 15 years, Chile has had positive growth rates of over 5 percent per year, achieved a \$10,000 per capita income, and reduced absolute poverty from over 40 percent to 18 percent.

In spite of these economic gains, Chile's maldistribution of wealth remains the second worst in Latin America after Brazil. Chile also remains highly dependent for its foreign exchange earnings on primary products. Copper, historically its most important export, is still responsible for 44 percent of earnings. More than one speaker reported on a process of de-industrialization that has contributed to a continuing problem of high unemployment. Chile's agricultural sector is very strong, but more than 250,000 rural inhabitants remain in dire poverty working marginal lands.

Participants gained an understanding of the Chilean economy from several different speakers. A three-hour session with Sara Larraín, program director of the Sustainable Chile Program, an environmental NGO, opened our conference schedule. In 1994, Larraín was the presidential candidate of the United Left. In her talk, "Globalization and Its Alternatives," she provided an excellent overview of economic and environmental issues. At UAI, Professor Marcelo Villena, in a talk entitled "Chile's Economy: Perspectives and Challenges," provided a more mainstream and optimistic outlook on Chile's economic future.

The Catholic Church is involved with many other organizations, both in researching economic and social problems and in developing and promoting grassroots solutions. On the second day we heard a panel that focused on the role of the church in social development. It included panelists who worked in rural development in Southern Chile, Mario Rivas and Jorge Brito, together with Ana Leighton of the Vicaria's social development arm. We visited two projects supported by the church that operate within the framework of the People's Economy movement. One was a project in a poor housing settlement where a credit program was established to allow residents to save money and eventually move to better housing in another neighborhood. The overwhelming majority of the participants in the program are women. We also visited a small new farming cooperative on the outskirts of Santiago that doubles as a retreat center and farming museum. The majority of participants involved in this project are also female.

A major focus of the visit was an analysis of the Pinochet dictatorship, the role of

the Catholic Church during the dictatorship, and the efforts since 1990 to account for the human rights violations that occurred in the preceding 17 years. In lectures and site visits, we heard from Hugo Guitterez, human rights lawyer; Mireya Garcia, vice president of the Organization of the Families of the Disappeared; and Enrique Palet, Secretary for Communications for the Archdiocese Office for Human Rights. Palet provided an excellent overview of the role that the Catholic Church played under Cardinal Silva in the 1970s and 1980s as an advocate for human rights in the face of the dictatorship. Two site visits highlighted these issues: a conversation with two women whose relatives were disappeared by the dictatorship, and a meeting at the Solidarity Foundation, whose appliqué quilts became known throughout the world as a voice against the repression of the dictatorship. The foundation continues as a source of income for several hundred poor women through the support of handicrafts.

Contemporary Chilean politics and the country's relationship with the United States were also important focuses. A preliminary prospective on the current political and economic system was provided by sociologist Gonzalo de la Maza, professor at the Catholic University and executive director of the Program of Citizenship and Local Management. UAI History Professor Fernando Wilson provided an overview of U.S.-Chile relations dating back nearly 200 years. The chair of the Political Science Department, Victoria Hurtado, provided an excellent overview of politics during the last 30 years, with special emphasis on the December 2005 presidential election. The group was in Chile at an especially interesting time as a new conservative candidate, Sebastián Piñera, entered the race, after which Soledad Alvear, a Christian Democrat who was once favored to become the next president, dropped out. Socialist Michelle Bachelet became the first woman to lead a major Latin American country after a near-win in December and a victory in the run-off election held January 15, 2006.

Education and culture also received attention. A comprehensive overview of the Chilean higher education system was offered by sociologist Jose Joaquin Bruner, one of the country's leading progressive intellectuals. The country's late national poet, Pablo Neruda, was engaged by visits to two of his homes, La Chascona in Santiago and Isla Negra near Valparaiso. We were accompanied to the latter by UAI professor Macarena Roca, who provided the group with some of Neruda's poetry. We also had a conference with Jorge Coulon, a leader of the singing troupe Inti-Illimani, world renowned practitioners of traditional Chilean and Latin American music. Jorge shared with us the role that Inti-Illimani played as a group-in-exile, keeping alive the struggle against the dictatorship. We later attended a concert by current leading singer of Chilean New Song, Oscar Andrade.

At the very minimum, the visit provided a group of our faculty with a heightened

understanding of a country to which our students will be traveling regularly in the coming years. We have deepened the relationship with Adolfo Ibañez University, which was a wonderful host during our time in Viña del Mar/Valparaíso.

— *Introduction by Gary Prevost*

Gladys White

I had the privilege of attending a series of conferences and social projects with the Latino/Latin American delegation, presented by academics, intellectuals, and social activists in the region.

It was a faculty development trip that provided not only an extraordinary experience, but allowed us to conceptualize that experience and devise ways in which to integrate it into our school curricula and create effective strategies for our overseas program at Universidad Adolfo Ibañez. This delegation also gave us the opportunity to build a strong relationship with the university and the former Vicaria de la Solidaridad, now called Episcopado Social. It is my hope that in the future other delegations can take advantage of coming closer to Latin American cultural, political, and economic reality.

The conferences provided us with political, economic, and structural explanations of Chilean society, but most importantly we listened to people living in marginalized communities, listened to the families of the disappeared during Pinochet's military regime, and visited solidarity projects for alternative economies.

The stories of these people added up to a powerful analysis of today's Chile and should inspire us to challenge the U.S. social and neo-liberal economic policies in Latin America that continue to impoverish people. Chile, the country with the best economic situation in Latin America, is still a telling reflection of the human tragedy of millions of Latin Americans.

The promise of neo-liberal ideologues that the so-called "Washington Consensus" — a program of privatization, free reign for foreign trade and investment, and drastic fiscal and interest rate policies — would revive developing countries' economies has proven a monumental deception for the majority of the population in Chile. Along with Brazil, Chile has one of the highest social inequality gaps in the region. Neo-liberal economic programs have exacerbated poverty and unemployment for the vast majority, while creating an ever-wealthier elite. Our presenters at Episcopado Social pointed out the mistake of Chile's ruling class in believing that development is determined solely by economic factors.

Chile's current economic model contributes to gross economic growth and at the same time to social inequalities as well as migration to the capital. In a country of 15 million people, 6 million live in Santiago. For me it was clear that Chile, in spite of its

economic growth, is at a critical juncture. Chileans must decide whether progress on key social issues will be sought on a regional basis or on a hemispheric basis, thereby cementing the hemisphere as a key bloc in the international system, or whether they will pursue bilateral agreements as they are currently doing, in particular with the United States. The close ties of Chile's government with U.S. economic policies and politics and Chile's leading trading role in the southern hemisphere has fueled rivalries and historic conflicts with its neighbors, Argentina, Peru, and Bolivia.

In our conferences I heard the implicit complaint that the notion of "sustainable development" is a Western construct that does not fit the reality of contemporary South America. The economic benefits of free trade for a few companies appear to outweigh — in the view of the government — the environmental and social costs. Throughout the conferences I was struck by the total neglect to cover the plight of indigenous peoples. When issues of free trade were discussed there was no reference to the land claim of the Mapuches (Araucanians) and related issues concerning environmental degradation, political power, and social inequality.

We were exposed to the discussion of contradictory impulses between the economic and the social fronts. While Chile's recent GNP has experienced a considerable growth (7%) in the economy, this growth is concentrated in a handful of export companies. Two hundred companies account for 82 percent of the export industry. Political, economic, and social structural reforms are not only slow, but it seems the government of the Concertación is not willing to abandon Pinochet's neo-liberal policies. Fifteen years after Pinochet's reign, the government of the Concertación has accommodated itself to the economic and social models left by the dictatorship. The Constitution of 1980 has not changed, except for minor amendments; in practice it has legitimized those neo-liberal economic and social models. The Concertación represents limited progress in justice and human rights.

Pinochet has not yet been indicted for crimes committed during his reign, nor has most of the military involved in murder, disappearances, and torture of the political opposition. On June 1, the Court of Appeals applied the Amnesty law of 1978 to the highest ranking officers of the DINA (National Intelligence Directorate) responsible for coordinating the activities of the intelligence services of the army, navy, air force, Carabineros, and Investigations Police. The DINA functioned as a secret police and was engaged in the repression, torture, murder, and "disappearance" of dissidents. Instead of justice, the Concertación moved toward reparation to the families of the disappeared in 2004. Lagos, Chile's president, then announced that unfortunately he had to take this money from social programs. The military, which was responsible for most human right violations, enjoys 10 percent of the revenues of the copper mines in Chile, but the money for reparations came from the same population that suffered the worse persecution.

We covered virtually all aspects of Chilean economy and politics, but perhaps most interesting was the role of the Catholic Church during the years of dictatorship and its current role in building an economy of solidarity in opposition to the neo-liberal model. During Pinochet's regime the Catholic Church vigorously defended human rights, paving the way for democracy. The Catholic Church sheltered the persecuted, helped people into exile, and kept a record of the disappeared that was later used to investigate and prove the crimes of the regime. It withstood the attacks of the regime and presented an ecumenical front in the protection of the population. This prevented a larger scale of crimes in Chile, in contrast to Argentina, where the Catholic Church kept silent or collaborated with the regime and where an estimated 35,000 people disappeared — killed with great efficiency by the state terrorist system.

In Chile, the Catholic Church was on the side of the less privileged and has been the most important force for civil rights and social transformation. People in Chile are strong supporters of the Catholic Church and acknowledge its crucial role in the peaceful transition to democracy. It was an all encompassing social force during the dictatorship and still remains a powerful force. Some organizations, like the families of the disappeared, would like to see the Church help to bring closure to the crimes committed during Pinochet's rule. The Church believes that now, under a democratic regime, its role has changed and it has to meet the challenge of economic and social inequality in Chile. There is actually no economic project for the marginalized in which the Church is not taking an active role. The people in the Vicariate and the University of Adolfo Ibañez bear testimony to the way in which the Catholic Church is developing a vision of human rights and social equality.

Sandy Bot-Miller

¿Dónde descansa tu cuerpo para llevarte una flora?

Reading accounts of the atrocities of habitual torture, execution, exile, and disappearance that occurred during General Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship in Chile (1973–1990), and the United States' support in overthrowing the previous presidency of Salvador Allende that led to such a brutal dictatorship, was a sobering reality even before setting foot on Chilean soil. Hearing the far-reaching and lingering effects of such a dictatorship, further explored by both religiously and politically involved Chileans during several lectures and panel discussions, provided an even deeper understanding of this dark period of Chilean history. Yet nothing was as powerful or poignant as listening to the individual stories of Chileans forced to live with the memories and unanswered questions of having lost loved ones whose present whereabouts are still unknown.

Of particular significance to me was an afternoon spent with two Chilean women

from the Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos (Group of Relatives of Those Detained and Disappeared). One woman lost her newlywed husband; the other lost her father as a very young child. Both women stood somberly in front of the room as we gradually trickled in, photographs of husband and father pinned to their blouses. As I sat directly in front of them, the pain they were forced to carry into later adulthood was visibly apparent to me. I could not control the tears that slowly but steadily started trickling down my face. Another's grief always has the capacity to trigger memories of one's own grief.

As the two women shared their reality of living with questions still unanswered after thirty years, I was aware that my heartache over losing my first-born daughter to an unexplainable, unidentifiable illness at eleven months of age was at the brink of my consciousness. Also close to mind was the excruciating pain the Wetterling family has endured since 1989 when eleven-year-old Jacob was stolen by a kidnapper still at large. The family and extended St. Joseph, Minnesota, community still holds out hope for answers; but as of today, has none. Human grief knows no geographical or cultural boundaries.

And yet, these women spoke not only on behalf of their own personal losses, but for an entire nation — for the thousands of Chilean families who still live without knowing the whereabouts of their disappeared loved ones. On the wall behind them hung a large banner with photographs and names of seventy-two disappeared women. In large bold print loomed the question: *¿Dónde descansa tu cuerpo para llevarte una flor?* [Where does your body rest so that I can bring you a flower?]

The visual of such a large group of disappeared women was overpowering. I could only imagine the acts of violence inflicted upon this group of women, photographed with faces brimming with life. Up to this point, we had heard stories of the disappeared husbands, boyfriends, fathers, brothers, and sons — but not of women. We learned that while women tirelessly pursued the search for their disappeared male family members and friends, the men did not actively seek answers to questions concerning the location of their disappeared wives, girlfriends, mothers, sisters, or daughters. It was politically more dangerous for males to participate in such searches. And so it was left up to women to also look for the vanished women.

Today I am left pondering how to live life differently as a result of my deeper awareness of how our government's assumptions and decisions once again contributed to such tragic loss of life. There is no simple answer. But I am forced to wrestle with the questions daily as I view the Chilean *arpillera* artwork (hand-sewn patchwork story cloth) hanging on my office wall, or as I listen to the voices of Chilean women singing, determined to make the world aware of the still unaccounted for disappeared — women as well as men:

*Son ellas cual las guirnaldas que construiran la historia,
y por eso con euforia, declaramos firmemente
que es imperioso y urgente que logremos encontrarlas*

[They are the garlands that will construct history
And for that reason, with vigor,
We declare firmly that it is imperative
And urgent that we manage to find them.]*

*Words from the song, “Decimos por la mujer desaparecida” [We speak for the disappeared women] from the CD *Canto Esperanza* [I Sing Hope], performed by Conjunto Folclórico Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos.

Lisa Ohm

Because of my previous two years of service as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in rural community development in Bolivia, Chile’s neighbor to the north, certain things were poignantly familiar to me: the *empanada*, a pocket of dough with cheese or other fillings; the national dance, the *cueca*; and the Chilean New Song group, *Inti-Ilumani*, named after Bolivia’s highest mountain. Bolivia was a significant part of the Inca Empire, and a visit to Santiago’s well-known Museum of Pre-Columbian Art reminded me that Northern Chile (including Santiago) was likewise an important sector of that ancient realm. Despite our pre-trip reading, I was unprepared for the strong contrast between the sincere hospitality of the peaceful, progressive, and quite Europeanized *Santigueños*, and the wake of pain left by the crimes against humanity committed by the brutally repressive regime of General Augusto Pinochet.

Chile’s September 11

Chile, too, had a September 11. On that day in 1973 a military coup overthrew the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende and Pinochet installed himself as President and Supreme Commander of the Nation. His dictatorship (1973–1989) is past, but the scars of its deep physical and psychological wounds remain thirty years later.

Chile continues to wrestle with stark memories of that time: 1,000 Chileans executed, 3,000 disappeared (90,000 disappeared throughout Latin America), and an estimated 30,000 — or maybe one million! — exiled. These numbers represent a small fraction of Chile’s total population of 15 million, but Chile is a small country with a long history of political stability and democratic traditions. Strung out along the west coast of South America yet equal in size to two Minnesotas, this Andean nation is highly centralized in Santiago, the capital and home to 6 million. The

moral questions raised by Chile's history are similar to those raised in situations of genocide and crimes against humanity committed elsewhere in the world.

The Arpillera Movement

The *arpillera* movement began during the Pinochet dictatorship with the desperate attempt of women to find their husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, and daughters who had been detained by police or the military and never seen again. Their dogged searches led the women on regular rounds to jails, detention camps, and military offices, where they encountered each other and gradually began exchanging their stories. Sometimes they were told that their loved ones had been transferred to another prison, or that they should come back again later, or that they should forget their missing husbands who had left them for other women. Eventually, however, the women, to their horror and disbelief, learned that their loved ones had simply disappeared.

Their common grief and outrage ignited an activist movement of protest when they began sewing scraps of cloth — often from their own clothing or those of a loved one who had disappeared — onto a burlap (*arpilla*) backing to form quilt-like tapestries that revealed their painful stories. The regime tried unsuccessfully to silence the women, as it had the rest of the country, but their passion, perseverance, and bravery became highly politicized and organized as they sewed the *arpilleras* in the basements of Catholic churches or secretly at home, shipping them clandestinely to the outside world.

Marjorie Agosín, a professor of Spanish at Wellesley College, who was raised in Chile, was the first to recognize the production of the *arpilleras* as a movement that broke the silence surrounding the terror tactics of the regime. Agosín, who came to the United States with her parents at age 16, began her research on the history, production, and impact of the *arpilleras* in and outside of Chile in 1977, the first of many visits. She depicts in her writings the arrests, torture, grief, and loss so vividly portrayed in the *arpilleras*. After extensive research, she published a book in 1987, prior to the end of the dictatorship, on the power of a needle and thread in the hands of unschooled housewives and mothers. A second book appeared after the end of the dictatorship, in 1996.

Una Chilena vale tres Chilenos

Women in Chile command high regard. A local saying is that it takes three Chilean men to equal one Chilean woman. Although women did not receive the right to vote until 1949, the Pinochet years quickly politicized them, especially those in the lower and middle classes. While women started the movement and continue to work to bring justice back to Chile, men have been forced to remain

more passive. Initially, men who sought disappeared relatives were themselves at risk of disappearing, but women still dominate the movement today. Despite setbacks, women journalists, lawyers, and politicians as well as activists, social workers, and family members are keeping the government's feet to the fire. In the December 2005 elections, Chile came close to electing its first woman president, Michelle Bachelet. Bachelet then won the run-off election held on January 15, 2006, raising morale in the women's movement.

Some of the family members of the victims of the dictatorship formed a formal organization in the early 1970s, the Association of the Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared, which carries on the campaign for truth and justice today. They know this will not bring back their loved ones, but they seek an honorable burial for their bones. And they want those responsible to reveal the facts of these disappearances, although it is commonly believed they were executed and buried in unmarked mass graves. The women are now pursuing justice in the courts in an ongoing struggle against the impunity of the Pinochet regime.

Now 89, Pinochet lives under house arrest in Santiago, while some 200 cases filed against him for genocide and state terror languish in the Chilean judicial system. The amnesty Pinochet decreed in 1978 for all military personnel, including himself, is no longer as effective as before. Still, the 1980 Constitution written by the dictator and intended to benefit him and his supporters remains in effect, as well as the neo-liberal economic system he established.

Today it is chiefly Pinochet's declining physical and mental health that may yet shield him from standing trial. The women sewing the *arpilleras*, however, won't go away and are still shouting in cloth and thread *No a la impunidad* [No to impunity].

Gary Prevost

Participating in the faculty study-travel group in Chile was a highly rewarding personal experience. As a graduate student and political activist at the University of Minnesota in the early 1970s, I was intrigued by the peaceful socialist revolution of Salvador Allende. While I was somewhat skeptical that Allende's idealistic strategy could succeed, the achievements of his short tenure in office were inspiring. Most importantly, the majority poor of the country were being empowered in a way that was rarely seen in Latin America. The tragic death of Allende on September 11, 1973, and the subsequent military repression challenged those of us who were inspired by the Popular Unity efforts to work on behalf of the large number of political activists imprisoned by the Pinochet regime. I helped found the Minnesota chapter of the United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, and for

the next several years worked to bring attention to the situation in Chile and provide hope to those who were suffering repression.

These connections to Chile made certain moments of our visit highly emotional for me. That was especially true of our visit to the monument dedicated to the more than 3,000 victims of the military coup, located in the Santiago municipal cemetery. Styled after the Vietnam memorial in Washington it contains the names of those who have been identified as victims. Since its construction, it has become a powerful magnet for the people who lost loved ones. On the day I visited the site there were several photos at the base of the wall that had been left in memory of the victims. We learned that the memorial had been constructed only recently, as a result of pressure from groups such as the Relatives of the Disappeared. Our meeting with two representatives of the disappeared was one of the highlights of our visit. We were deeply moved by the courage and commitment of the inspiring women who respectively had lost a father and a husband.

For me, one of the most powerful presentations scheduled for our group was by Jorge Colon of the musical group, Inti-Illimani. At many points during twenty years of doing Latin American solidarity work we have hosted groups from the Latin American New Song tradition, including a concert by Inti-Illimani in Minneapolis in the 1980s. In the midst of our work these concerts were highly motivational, so it was very good to meet Jorge in person and to know that they are still making beautiful music representing the best of Latin American popular culture.

John Yoakam

It was the last scheduled stop of our nine-day visit. I was feeling tired, overloaded with information. My brain was weary from trying to keep up with Spanish. Around 4 p.m. on a Friday afternoon we arrived at the administrative offices, gift shop, and workshop of the Fundación Solidaridad in Santiago, an organization that has its roots in an underground resistance movement during the military coup of 1973.

Winnie, our hostess, offered to tell the story of the organization in English. I was grateful and listened intently. Mothers, wives, and sister of the disappeared during the Pinochet dictatorship sewed together scraps of cloth into tapestries, or *arpilleras*, which were then smuggled out of the country or mailed (with a fake return address), in order to tell the story of the brutal repression, torture, and murder that was taking place in Chile at that time.

What evolved from these terrifying beginnings was a movement to assist poor women to learn skills (making crafts, learning math, business, leadership, and organizational skills). For nine days we learned the political and economic history of Chile from a variety of outstanding lectures. But at the Fundación Solidaridad,

where I was able to purchase crafts that were well-made and attractive while at the same time supporting a cause that empowers women and the poor, it all came together for me.

Though more prosperous than most Latin American countries, Chile still has intense poverty, a poverty which scars the spirit, which is the object of social discrimination. Social work, the discipline I teach, focuses much of its attention on poverty, particularly as it affects women and children. At the Fundación I heard how a few brave women organized to empower others. Winnie told us that she thought at one time that poverty could be erased with a little economic assistance. But she learned quickly that the social stigma runs much deeper. Empowering women to lead their own organizations, to make decisions for themselves, and to provide a supporting social network is raising not only the standard of living for the poor in this country, but also the expectations for a better life that these women and their families can have in a democracy emerging from a brutal dictatorship.

Ernie Diedrich

I flew to Chile with a collage of impressions lifted from textbooks, articles, and a student paper dealing with the Chilean transformation of social security. All of these impressions swirled in the context of Pinochet's repression and reforms. My overall view, tempered with caveats, was that Chile seemed to be doing well.

I interpreted the Chilean lurch to more *laissez-faire* policies as positive, in that many indicators economists typically use to measure success were headed in the right direction, especially when compared with Chile's neighbors. The caveats, however, included statistics that indicated greater inequality and greater environmental degradation resulting from Chile's success. The question I brought to Chile was whether or not the Chilean "success" was sustainable, and whether it was worth the cost — the cost of Pinochet's coup and the ongoing cost to those at the bottom rung of society of *laissez-faire* policies.

Though our trip took us only to Santiago and the Valparaiso/Viña del Mar area along the coast, I believe I got a good impression of the vitality and challenges of the Chilean economy through scheduled lectures, field trips, and extra readings. I very much enjoyed Professor Marcelo Villena's presentation, "Chile's Economy: Perspectives and Challenges," at the University Adolfo Ibañez. His was the usual view economists give when they describe the abstraction of the economy. The rest of the economic story came from Sara Larrain, director of the Sustainable Chile Program; sociologist Gonzalo de la Maza; a panel of individuals who spoke about the church's role in social development; and the field trips to El Gomero, a squatter settlement, and Economy of Solidarity field trips (Liray and the Solidarity Foundation). They

provided an insight into the consequences (and possible responses) that have accompanied Chile's experience with neo-liberal economic policies.

I learned that Chile has prospered (solid income growth before and since the recovery from the 1999 recession) while government promises to help the poor with better public service delivery, educational and health care reform, and a more efficient and secure social security system have not been kept. Chile has done well with more income (GDP growth), but this has come at the cost of greater economic equality. Additionally, the focus on GDP growth has incurred a very significant environmental deficit that makes Chile's dependence on commodity exports such as copper and fish (salmon) and energy imports from its neighbors, unsustainable in the long-run.

In short, Chile is currently feasting on its environmental capital, enriching the economic winners in the transition to a more laissez-faire market engineered by the "Chicago Boys," and hoping to improve its environmental record before its luck runs out. It is trying this with tenuous political and social stability while repairing the social ruptures caused by the Pinochet dictatorship. Chile's "success" does not appear to be sustainable and the pain from the Pinochet terror may never fully heal.

The question that repeatedly popped up for me that would apply to other countries was: How do we reduce poverty and foster peace and justice without destroying the environment? Another version of this question is: If the current form of globalization is not sustainable (and it does not seem to be to me), then what form of globalization would be sustainable?

We saw the neo-liberal answer — the Chilean version of the Washington Consensus — and how it worked and didn't work in Chile and, by extension, in the rest of Latin America. We also experienced in our field trips the glimmer of an economic form that reduces the stark uncertainty of an economy with a threadbare safety net that encourages solidarity in what many call a "third way" between socialism and capitalism. It was only a glimmer since the projects we visited (housing for the urban poor and a variant of a cooperative) were an insignificant part of the Chilean economy. Is this path an option? I hope so, though I'm skeptical, given this "third way's" lack of notable success in Chile and in other countries.

Finally, I saw, smelled, and got an inkling of life beyond economic abstractions. Maybe most inspiring was the fusion of passion, romance, art, and thirst for social justice that the poet/diplomat Neruda embodied in his writings and in his houses (we visited two). We might criticize his contradictions, but we can't say he didn't live an outsized, meaningful life. *Viva Neruda!*