

6. Resources to Learn More

WORK, DIGNITY & SOCIAL CHANGE: www.ArgentinaVideo.org

WEBSITES:

La Vaca online magazine: www.lavaca.org

La Fogata website: www.lafogata.org

Colectivo Situaciones: www.situaciones.org

Indymedia: www.argentina.indymedia.org

Dario/Maxi – Masacre De Avellaneda:

www.masacredeavellaneda.org

History: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Argentina

Znet's Argentina Watch (many articles in English):

www.zmag.org/lam/argentina_watch.cfm

Augusto's "Red de Solidaridades Rebeldes/Network of Rebellious Solidarities": www.solidaridadesrebeldes.kolgados.com.ar

BOOKS:

Horizontalidad, by Marina Sitrin. Pub: Cooperativa Chilavert Artes Gráficas, 2005. English version soon available through AK Press (<http://akpress.org>).

Hipotesis 891: Mas Alla de los Piquetes, by MTD Solano and Colectivo Situaciones. Pub: Ediciones De mano en mano, 2002.

De la Culpa a la Autogestión, ed. by Toty Flores (MTD La Matanza). Pub: MTD La Matanza Editora, 2002.

Repub: Ediciones Continente (printed in recovered printing press Cooperativa Chilavert Artes Gráficas), 2005.

Genealogia de la Revuelta, by Raul Zibechi. Pub: Letra Libre/Nordan-Comunidad, 2003.

PEOPLE (FILMMAKERS):

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Jesse Barnes: Jesse@ArgentinaVideo.org

7. Evaluation form (see inserted form)

Please fill it out and return it so we can keep in touch with facilitators and continue to improve the workshop!

Facilitator's Guide

1. Introduction to the purpose of the video workshop



Work, Dignity and Social Change brings the inspiring images and stories of four autonomous Unemployed Worker Movements in Argentina to groups and organizers as a lens to look at their local contexts. The intention is not to replicate their movements or tactics, but learn from

their experiences, find hope in their successes and build stronger movements wherever we are.

The organizers featured in the video discuss their efforts to create and sustain movements that strive to bring their communities towards greater autonomy and directly democratic ways of making decisions. They also give concrete examples of the projects that form the building blocks of this process and of the challenges they face along the way. For each lesson, strategy and pitfall brought out in the video we hope that, together with you, the facilitators, we can make the experiences relevant to your local circumstances.

The context of Argentina's unemployed workers' movements is unique in many ways, but it does hold several similarities to other areas around the globe (especially poor urban neighborhoods in the Americas). It may also provide us with a snapshot of the deepened economic crises that many say that the future will inevitably bring.



Our experience through several years of speaking tours with Argentine delegates in North America, is that personal contact between groups is very important, but so is the time to reflect on our compañer@s' struggles and make sense of the examples locally.

2. Suggestions of ways to use the video workshop

The structure of the workshop is really up to your creativity as facilitator and someone who knows the audience/participants. Below we give a suggested structure for a 2 hour workshop. We emphasize creating full participation to help everyone digest and apply the information in the video (see specific techniques below). Though one could view the entire video workshop start-to-finish in 1 hour and 5 minutes, this is not its intended use.

We'll begin with a description of each section so that you can choose the most useful ones for your participants:

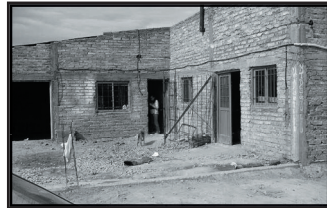
INTRODUCTION (HISTORY, INTRO TO MOVEMENTS – 10MIN 38SEC)

The section begins with a very brief history of contemporary Argentina from colonization to Perón to the “Dirty War” to neoliberal reforms to economic crisis and popular uprising in December 2001 to the present day. It then outlines the origins and geography of the four movements featured throughout the video, as well as their principles and a brief outline of their work. The section closes with a sentence on the purpose of the video workshop (though a more thorough presentation of purpose is suggested before showing any video).

Unless a group is very familiar with the situation in Argentina and the origins of the autonomous unemployed movements, we recommended that the workshop begin the introduction. (for hearing impaired participants, you can have the narrator's scripts available, which you can download from the website: www.ArgentinaVideo.org)

1. GETTING STARTED (ARRANCANDO – 11MIN 4SEC)

“Asking about what MTD members were doing in the years before the movements were formed, and what the early experiences of the movements were like, we hoped the similarities and differences would help us reflect on our own process of organization and movement building.” This section explores the time leading into the economic crisis and the beginning stages of building a movement.



2. BEHIND THE PIQUETE (TIMES OF PIQUETES/ROAD BLOCKADES, PRODUCTIVE PROJECTS/WORKER CO-OPS, SELF-MANAGEMENT – 8MIN 43SEC)



“While the media and the public have focused exclusively on the piquetes, the real story is what is happening in the neighborhoods: the assemblies, the creation of artisan and productive projects, and the horizontal organizing that allows the movements to mobilize these dramatic new forms of protest.”

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

3) WE DIDN'T HEAR MUCH ABOUT THE MADRES DE LA PLAZA DE MAYO—WHAT ARE THEY UP TO THESE DAYS?

The well-known human rights group of mothers of the disappeared, the first to speak out against the atrocities of the military dictatorship in Argentina, have undoubtedly played an important role in creating political space for the Argentine left. In terms of their current status, it depends on which Madres you're talking about. The original group has splintered a couple times now; the two major factions are the “Asociación Madres” and the “Madres: Linea Fundadores.” The Asociacion group led by Hebe de Bonafini, which runs the Madres University, was the one that recently declared that there was no need to continue the annual March of Resistance because “the enemy was no longer inside [the presidential palace].” The tens of thousands who turned out for the march anyways may be sending a message that—while nothing can take away from the enormous historical role the Madres played—they do not represent a legitimate radical political organization at this time.



4) ARE THESE MOVEMENTS VIOLENT?

None of the movements discussed in the project advocate violence as a means of affecting change. During actions such as piquetes which carry a high likelihood of violent state repression, the movements have developed different techniques, including encouraging media presence and organizing security groups to limit the ability of the police and military to attack and injure community members.

5) WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MTDs AND OTHER GROUPS SUCH AS THE ZAPATISTAS AND THE MST IN BRAZIL?

In the past years members of the MTD's have had several opportunities to interact with important social movements from many other countries throughout Latin America and the world—both through exchange of ideas/writings and direct personal contact. Many feel that these visits are invaluable opportunities to learn from each other's experiences and take steps towards developing international networks of support and solidarity. It is important to remember though that these are separate social movements with distinct principles and processes who won't always agree with each others decisions; the goal is to find effective ways to work together while respecting these differences.

5. Frequently Asked Questions

1) HAVEN'T THINGS GOTTEN BETTER SINCE THE ECONOMIC CRISIS?

That depends on who you ask. Life for most of downtown Buenos Aires' middle class has largely returned to some degree of normalcy. Some of their faith in the country's institutions may have recovered, although certainly the memory of the "corralito" (freezing of personal savings accounts) and peso devaluation will not soon disappear. For the poor of Buenos Aires outskirts and the country's interior, however, change has been a lot slower. It's important to remember that unemployment and poverty were major problems in these parts of Argentina long before the visible economic collapse of 2001. The government claims to have reduced the national unemployment level to about 12% (plus another 8-9% on government subsidies), but this has mainly been



accomplished by changing the way the numbers are collected and calculated. And while some of the more acquiescent social movements have reaped large financial benefits from the Kirchner government, recent examples such as the struggles of public hospital employees, transit workers and petroleum workers have shown that those who continue to struggle against the government for better wages and living conditions are still subject to brutal repression.

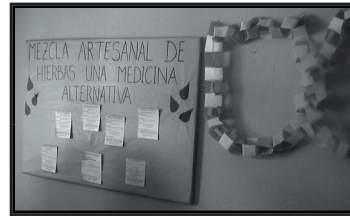
2) WHAT ABOUT THE RECOVERED FACTORIES?

The worker-recovered factories are another very interesting thing happening in Argentina right now. The National Movement of Recovered Factories (MNER) is a major player in some of the solidarity networks built recently with MTDs and neighborhood asambleas with the goals of learning from one-another, supporting mutual objectives, and stopping/preventing governmental repression and eviction. The focus of this video project is on the Unemployed Workers' Movements and we decided not to try and include the factories, which tend to have unique histories and distinct organizational structures. Naomi Klein and Avi Lewis' movie, "The Take" (<http://thetake.org>) offers one perspective on the recuperated factory movement, although the full scope of the movement exceeds what this—or any single movie—can encompass. New videos about the Zanon ceramic factory in Neuquen are other interesting resources (some are available in English here: <http://www.alavio.org>).



Suggestions of ways to use the video workshop (cont.)

3. EDUCATION & HEALTH (8MIN 9SEC)



"In addition to dealing with issues of day-to-day survival, MTDs have begun to look at fundamental areas such as education and health care and have designed community-based alternatives in neighborhoods where the reach of government services is inadequate or non-existent."

4. AUTONOMY & HORIZONTALITY (6MIN 47SEC)

"MTDs are a unique example of how the principles and theories of non-hierarchical organizing and its day-to-day practice of assemblies, cooperative work, and attention to power-dynamics are able to interact with, and inform, each other."

5. REPRESSION AND NETWORKS OF SOLIDARITY (8MIN 4SEC)

"Faced with persistent and often violent repression, and recognizing the importance of joining with politically aligned struggles, the MTDs have built network of solidarity on local, regional and global levels."



6. RACE, GENDER, AND DIVERSITY (7MIN 31SEC)

"The MTDs are at various stages of recognizing the fundamental importance of issues of race, gender, and diversity and incorporating them in the struggle to create new social relations free of domination."



NEW SOCIAL RELATIONS (CLOSING - 4MIN 21SEC + CREDITS)

"A constant thread running through the work of the MTDs is that radical change begins by deeply examining and then re-creating the way community members interact with one another and bond together to confront systems of exploitation and oppression." This short section is recommended as the closing to the workshop to bring hope and a sense of "the time is now."

Suggestions of ways to use the video workshop (cont.)

POSSIBLE WORKSHOP FORMAT:

For a 2 hour workshop with a neighborhood organization and guests:

(5min) 1. Introductions/Ice-breaker Game (see “suggestions for creating full participation” below)

(1min) 2. Purpose of this workshop and overview of the structure (1 minute prepared by you, the facilitator, about why this group is doing the workshop and you propose to run it)

(1min) 3. Questions/suggestions on the purpose or format?

(11min) 4. Show video: INTRODUCTION section

(10min) 5. Questions about the Argentina context (have FAQ ready on hand)

(~8min) 6. View a section of the video

(25min) 7. Discussion using questions (see below)

(~8min) 8. View another section of the video

(25min) 9. Discussion using questions

(5min) 10. View conclusion section “NEW SOCIAL RELATIONS”

(15min) 11. Final discussion moving towards concrete/what can we do here/ next steps (plan another Work, Dignity & Social Change workshop?)

(5min) 12. Evaluation/Announcements



3. Questions to spark discussion after each chapter: (see insert... lost it? Get it from the website: www.ArgentinaVideo.org)

4. Suggestions for creating full participation

a) Start with an icebreaker: To build effective participation, it's important to start from the beginning. The idea of an interactive opening activity and short video sections is to avoid the passive observer syndrome that often comes with video screenings. Even an engaging video often forces people to sink into spectator mode. There are lots of other adaptable icebreakers at this website (case sensitive): <http://www.eslflow.com/ICEBREAKERSreal.html>



b) Have people prepared to talk about their group or their part of the group. It may be a good idea to ask some people to prepare to share from their experience, especially if you're doing the workshop with a mixture of groups represented. Or if the workshop is with a group that doesn't get a chance to have in depth discussions, this can be a chance for certain perspectives to be brought out in relation to a path of movement-building or

long-term autonomy.

c) There are a few facilitator's techniques that may help create greater participation and are worth reviewing before the workshop:

i) Drawing People Out – Directly asking people open-ended questions: “and that's because...?” ... “You said __, so ...?” ... “and...?”

ii) Encouraging – Creating an opening without putting anyone on the spot: “Does anyone else have an idea?” ... “Can anyone give examples?”

iii) Go-arounds – Everyone in turn is given a chance to speak uninterrupted and without comment or criticism.

iv) Breaking into small groups – Can help those intimidated by larger groups speak up and have their views fed back to the rest of the group.

v) Brainstorming – People shout out ideas without fear of comment or criticism - an excellent way to get the creative juices flowing.

d) Have some ideas prepared of connections between the Argentine experience and the group(s) participating in the workshop to start ideas flowing.