

## **Reframing Poverty: What role for the Middle Classes?**

### **Introduction**

The proposed planning visits launch comparative research on the links between middle class vulnerability, identities and poverty politics in Argentina and the United States. Poverty researchers are recognizing that the flow of ideas about how to respond to economic crisis should not go exclusively from rich to poor countries (Ravallion, 2009). In the United States, some scholars are recognizing the insularity and exceptionalism of U.S. poverty studies and are calling for comparative multinational research to expand our approaches to combating poverty (Smeeding, 2008). This research explores how middle class actors understand and respond to poverty across the Americas. We urgently need research on the ways in which new forms of economic globalization are transforming the economic position, identities and poverty politics of middle class groups across the Americas because middle classes hold material, political and symbolic resources that can legitimate or shape public action on poverty (Reis and Moore, 2005). The following are central questions: how are middle class groups experiencing economic crisis? How are cultural and economic processes mutually intertwined and embedded in places (in geographies and economic histories) to produce middle class identities? How do middle class actors understand poverty at home and afar? Under what circumstances do middle class actors define themselves in opposition to, or in solidarity with the poor as they engage with political and economic agendas in their countries and beyond their borders?

The purpose of these planning visits is to consolidate research partnerships; hone and refine research questions and hypotheses; secure access to secondary data sources, finalize research design decisions and visit potential field sites for primary data collection. The outcome of this planning process will be the finalization of a major research project and the submission of proposals to the National Science Foundation, Geography and Spatial Sciences Program and the Norwegian Research Council Poverty and Peace Program.

In this climate of financial crisis, share price bubbles, intense job losses and defaults on housing and consumer debts, the middle classes are vulnerable and anxious across the Americas (Skocpol, 1999; Schram, 2000; Birdsall et.al., 2000). A range of global forces are shaping middle class experiences including privatization of public services and reductions in social protections and stable public sector employment, as well as macroeconomic volatility and economic instability led by banking crises. This is coupled with market triumphalism; an ideological cornerstone of recent policy shifts that argues for benefits of greater competition and freer markets and a reduced social role for the state as the path to prosperity (Goode and Maskovsky, 2001). In addition, economic polarization is produced by changes in the nature of work towards flexible employment and widespread outsourcing of production (often into the informal sector, Lawson, 1995), coupled with reductions in union power and changing forms of political representation (Houtzager, Collier, Harris and Lavalle, 2002; Firebaugh, 2003). These shifts are accompanied by the global spread of luxury goods and consumption standards that are

unattainable by many in middle and poorer classes, but that nonetheless shape their self-identifications and poverty politics (Watkins, 1993; Birdsall, et al, 2000; Cohen, 2004).

Branko Milanovic, a lead economist for the World Bank, recently argued that global middle classes are shrinking and asks provocatively: what happens to a world without a middle class (Milanovic, 2005)? Certainly, the current context suggests that the reproduction of the middle classes is a surprising achievement that needs to be explained rather than something we should take for granted. We don't know enough about what is currently happening to the middle classes globally, nor about their relationship to poorer social groups (Birdsall, et.al., 2000). Our research examines i) interconnected economic and cultural processes that produce and name the poor across the Americas and ii) the role of the non-poor in producing and solving poverty across the Americas. The proposed planning visit will launch comparative research on the links between middle class vulnerability, identities and poverty politics in Argentina and the United States. Our planning visits will identify which specific sectors of the middle class we will investigate (in terms of age, gender, race, occupation and so on) such that we can make robust comparisons across these countries. This research will focus on the employment/vulnerability of middle class people in major cities of Argentina and the US to explore the following questions:

- 1) How are middle class groups experiencing recent economic crises in the U.S. and Argentina? How can we robustly analyze middle class vulnerability (in terms of food security, employment stability, access to education, health care)?
- 2) How do middle class people understand impoverishment and the poor at home and afar, and how does this vary in terms of gender, race, age and vulnerability/security? How do understandings of poverty vary as middle class people face similar pressures to the poor (e.g around education, health care, food security and so on)?
- 3) How are cultural and economic processes mutually intertwined and embedded in places (in geographies and economic histories) to produce *both* certain cultural understandings of poverty *and* certain kinds of outcomes in terms of perpetuating or transforming poverty?
- 4) Where, through what mechanisms and under what circumstances do middle classes define themselves in opposition to, or in solidarity with the poor? What role do middle classes play in blocking, initiating or catalyzing poverty alleviation?

There are multiple definitions of the middle class in the literature. Some researchers identify middle class groups in terms of behavioral characteristics, socio-economic criteria and or particular values and attitudes (Crompton, 2008; Pressman, 2007). Others focus primarily on middle class relations to the economy, arguing that this group sells their intellectual and managerial labor rather than manual labor or thinks about their consumption patterns (Goldthorpe, 1996). We begin from the idea that middle class definitions will vary by place and that we have something to learn conceptually about this group through our comparative research discussions. In short, we recognize the complexity of this category and will consider how 'middle class' refers to

relative privilege in the social order (in relation to elite and poorer social groups) as this is framed in relation to local and transnational institutions, labor markets, the political scope of governing institutions at the national and/or global scales as well as cultural practices and symbols (Cohen, 2004: 5; Crompton, 2008).

We focus on middle class understandings of poverty because middle class actors have played historically important roles in articulating social and political agendas that are inclusive of those above (elites) and those below (the poor) in Europe, North America, South Africa and Argentina (Kildal and Kuhnle, 2005; O'Connor, 2002; De Swaan, 2005). Despite their historical role in supporting inclusive policies for social protection recent findings raise questions about the newly vulnerable and tenuous position of middle classes in the context of economic globalization and financial crises (Birdsall, et.al., 2000; Cohen, 2004; Crompton, 2008; Krugman, 2002). At the same time in some contexts, middle class actors are involved in framing poor others as deviant and dysfunctional in discourses of upward mobility (Lawson, Jarosz and Bonds, 2008; Schram, 2002). Arguably, without middle class involvement in democratic governance and pressing for social provisions and entitlements, contemporary western societies and cultures would be unthinkable. However, substantial evidence points to the co-presence of increases in economic growth and deepening and sharp inequalities within countries (Firebaugh, 2003; Birdsall, et.al. 2000). Further, in many advanced economies, middle classes are receding creating what is referred to as the 'disappearing middle' (Newman, 1999). So what roles do middle classes play today across the Americas in building future social cohesion and geographies of wealth and vulnerability?

We know little about how economic insecurity is reworking the identities and politics of middle class groups, nor about their relationship to poorer social groups under these rapidly shifting political-economic circumstances. Some suggestive research in the United States has explored the downward mobility of middle classes towards impoverishment, but that work focuses on the consequences for families rather than on how attitudes and actions regarding poverty are being reworked (Newman, 1999). In Argentina after the 2001 economic crisis, the middle classes were referred to as 'ruined' and 'the dispossessed' but we know little about how their experiences of economic vulnerability inform their ideas about, and relationships to, poverty and the poor (Arie, 2001; Sharrock, 2002). This project, which involves explicitly comparative research across the Americas through parallel research in both Argentina and the United States, responds to these gaps in our knowledge.

### **Linked Comparative International Research**

This planning visit will result in a collaborative and comparative research project across the Americas. We focus on the U.S. and Argentina because both countries have historically important middle classes that have been politically active in times of economic and political crisis as well as during nation-building projects of modernization and expanding public sector services and socially protective policies (Rock, 2002; O'Connor, 2002). As historically important countries within the Americas, the U.S. and Argentina are interconnected through trade and financial ties as well as through their

engagements with neoliberal economic and social policies. Both countries have pursued market opening and state retrenchment policies throughout the last two decades coupled with rollbacks in state social provisions and jobs, and increasing insecurity and anxiety among middle class groups. Both countries have also recently experienced dramatic financial and economic crises and we know little about the resultant economic vulnerability of middle class groups and their related poverty politics. Both countries also have long histories of European immigration which have shaped middle class identities and social cleavages. In addition, both countries have substantial numbers of people in poverty. In the U.S. poorer sectors are obscured by a political discourse focused on 'middle class need' despite the fact that 17 percent (50.9 million people) live in poverty in 2007. In 2006, 26 percent of Argentines were in poverty. Our research explores the particular roles that middle class actors are taking as agents of change and the sorts of alliances and actions that are emerging to address poverty across the Americas.

We also compare the U.S. and Argentina because of key differences between these places. Prior research by the P-I on rural poverty in the American Northwest traced the ways in which middle class understandings of poverty are shaped by social histories of specific locales as well as by the ways in which places are articulated with the global economy (Lawson and Jarosz, 2009). In this proposed comparative project, the United States has greater economic power and ability to borrow globally which opens different approaches to resolving economic crisis by engaging in stimulus spending aimed at middle class groups. Argentina in the post 2001 period, by contrast, had less economic leverage and more limited options for resolving economic crisis such that middle classes bear more severe burdens. These different responses to deep economic crisis allow for comparisons of both middle class material vulnerability and of how middle class people in each place relate to poverty and the poor. This comparison is also informative due to each country's distinctive political history, the relative strength of, and alliances between, middle classes and labor sectors in each country. In Argentina, the rise of the Radical Party led by middle sectors was central to building a broad-based popular democracy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Rock, 2002; Johnson, 1958). In the U.S. the middle class is a broad concept that is framed through consumption more than political solidarity with other sectors such as the U.S. labor movement.

Through linked, comparative international research, we will explore how our central concepts such as: middle classes, poverty, vulnerability and poverty alleviation are framed in both countries. This approach builds understandings within each research site and simultaneously uses those insights to pose conceptual and empirical questions about each other. In addition, this analytical framework draws on material and symbolic processes operating at a range of geographic scales, that come together to shape middle class politics in particular ways in places, rather than focusing only on the local scale. We will explore how cultural and economic processes are intertwined and embedded in places to produce particular understandings of impoverishment and certain kinds of outcomes in perpetuating or transforming poverty. Our analytical approach will reveal relevant processes by exploring how our key concepts are shaped both by the places in which they occur and by the relationships between the United States and Argentina.

## **Planning Visit Research Design**

We request funding to take our U.S.-based team of researchers to work with a team of scholars and students at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina (membership below). This interdisciplinary group of researchers and students knowledgeable about middle class poverty politics and class difference in Argentina and the U.S. will focus on finalizing a comparative research project for which we will seek major funding from the National Science Foundation, Geography and Spatial Sciences Program and the Norwegian Research Council.

Our planning visits will consolidate our research partnerships through face to face interactions; hone and refine our central research questions and hypotheses; secure access to secondary data sources, finalize research design decisions; and allow visits to potential field sites with research assistants. Face to face meetings are vital at this stage of our work. This project involves research across cultural and national boundaries and involves people with different positions within economic globalization and with different first-languages. We propose two, one-week planning visits between May, 2010 and September, 2011.

## **Research Team Members**

The researchers in this project are members of the Critical Global Poverty Studies network (CGPS chaired by Lawson) that forms the intellectual backdrop and institutional platform for our research. This specific project emerged from a series of meetings of international poverty scholars to discuss and identify pressing arenas in need of research and educational innovation (see <http://www.cgps.uib.no/> ). CGPS is part of a larger research and educational program on poverty linked to the Comparative Research Poverty Program (CROP), one of the five research programs of the International Social Science Council (ISSC) housed at UNESCO. Both CGPS and CROP will provide institutional support for our work through their websites, extensive contacts with scholars across the Americas, Europe and beyond as well as professional dissemination infrastructure of publications and conferences.

We request funds for the U.S. participants to travel to Argentina to complete the planning for this research. The U.S. team comprises of i) Vicky Lawson, Professor of Geography, University of Washington (Principal Investigator). Lawson has more than twenty years of experience conducting fieldwork on poverty, economic restructuring and migration in both Latin America and the United States. Her expertise includes secondary data analysis, survey research and in-depth data collection on the political-economy and identity aspects of poverty and social difference in both Latin America and North America; ii) Sarah Elwood, Associate Professor of Geography, University of Washington. Elwood works in the U.S. on the use of GIS and spatial knowledge by local activists to conceptualize and represent needs, conditions and priorities in impoverished urban communities; iii) Lucy Jarosz, Associate Professor of Geography, University of Washington. Jarosz has expertise in identifying and analyzing the material production of

poverty as well as its cultural and spatial representations and she also collaborated with Lawson on a recent National Science Foundation Project exploring economic restructuring and the cultural production of poverty in the American Northwest; iv) Leif Jensen, Professor of Rural Sociology and Demography, Pennsylvania State University. Jensen works on social stratification with emphasis on poverty, employment and underemployment, and informal work and other household economic survival strategies across the Americas. His expertise will be valuable in conceptualizing and measuring employment vulnerability of middle class actors post-crisis in both countries; v) Asun St. Clair, Professor of Sociology, University of Bergen (Norway) will participate as a poverty researcher and as Scientific Director of CROP. Professor St. Clair is deeply involved in poverty debates across the Americas and has conducted research on development discourse within international development institutions.

We collaborate in Argentina with three scholars who work on questions of neoliberal reforms, social inequality and questions of social and political identity formation in Argentina: i) Atilio Boron, Professor of Political Theory, University of Buenos Aires (UBA). Boron works on the political-economy of Argentinean development and will act as senior substantive advisor to the team on social and political change across the Americas; ii) Susana Murillo, Professor of Social Sciences, UBA. Murillo is at the Gino Germani Institute of Social Sciences, working on state-society relations and new forms of governance and how these are reworking social priorities and questions of social cohesion; iii) Alberto Cimadamore, Professor of Political Science and the Center for Studies of the Future at UBA. Cimadamore works on the state-society relations and the struggle against poverty. He also serves as Coordinator of International Relations of Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO) an umbrella organization supporting and disseminating social science investigations across Latin America. Cimadamore will provide both substantive input on poverty and social change in Argentina and also institutional support for the collaboration and dissemination processes through CLACSO. The U.S. and Argentinean scholars will all be active participants in the conceptual framing, research design and subsequent research grant applications (see detail on our activities below).

The participation of graduate students from both countries is central to this project. In-depth involvement of U.S. graduate students provides an invaluable educational opportunity both on the substance of the research, and in learning how to operationalize an international project. Each of these graduate students is already working on aspects of poverty across the Americas and they will bring a great deal of comparative and substantive perspective to our discussions in Buenos Aires. Dena Aufseeser, doctoral candidate in geography, University of Washington (UW) works on child poverty in Peru. Rebecca Burnett, previously a McNair Scholar, is a doctoral candidate in geography (UW). She works on welfare reform and citizenship among recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) in U.S. cities. Monica Farias is an Argentinean graduate student in geography (UW) who is beginning her studies on poverty and neoliberal reforms across the Americas. This project will bolster these students' credentials in geography, a discipline where women are still underrepresented in doctoral training and faculty ranks in the U.S. Our Argentinean

colleagues will also invite graduate students to our meetings and so our students will have the opportunity to collaborate with both faculty and other graduate students in Argentina.

### **Prior Communication and Progress to Date**

The U.S. and Norwegian team-members have had substantial discussions with the larger membership of GCPS about innovative approaches to poverty research at two workshops (Bergen, fall 2007; Seattle, winter, 2009) and these discussions laid the conceptual foundations for this project. These workshops were funded with start-up support from the University of Washington and the University of Bergen. Senior members of this research team have also met and initiated discussions of this work: Lawson (PI) met Atilio Boron, a senior Argentinean colleague at a conference in Bergen in fall 2007; and during a visit to Buenos Aires in early August, 2009, Prof. St. Clair met with our Argentinean colleagues to discuss progress on both the CGPS network and this project. Lawson taught in two summer schools on poverty studies for doctoral researchers in Bergen in 2008 and 2009, where she met with doctoral students from Argentina and further discussed and consolidated research relationships (see attached letters). In addition, our Argentinean colleagues will participate as new members of CGPS network at an intensive workshop in Bergen in winter 2010 also dedicated to conceptualizing collaborative and comparative research on poverty processes. Funding for this planning visit will allow us to move beyond international and interdisciplinary workshops that set broad research frameworks and instead will take U.S. researchers to Argentina in order to focus specifically on this empirical research on middle class vulnerability and poverty.

### **Meeting 1: Spring 2010 (five days)**

Meeting #1 at the University of Buenos Aires will bring together our full team of faculty and students to build out this research. Our meeting will accomplish two goals. First, we will further specify our central concepts, questions and hypotheses for this research. Second, we will build a relational comparison research design.

*Goal #1: identify current state of knowledge and gaps in knowledge (days 1-3).*

Participants will present their collective knowledge of both conceptual and empirical research from across global North and South to examine i) how are middle classes identified across the Americas, ii) how are middle classes experiencing economic crisis, what evidence of middle class vulnerability and iii) to what extent are middle classes defining themselves in opposition to, or in solidarity with the poor? Our discussions will grapple with the difficulties of defining the ‘middle classes’ as discussed on page 2 (Pressman, 2007).

We will explore how middle class categories and identities are defined in each country and how these are being reworked in relation to political and economic changes underway in their countries and beyond their borders. We will discuss the extent to which, and the ways in which, particular middle class groups (defined by age, gender, race, occupation, place of residence and so on) work as political facilitators and

organizers in support of the poor **or** the ways in which certain middle class groups respond to global economic instability through self-protection and hoarding that further marginalizes and endangers the poor. Participants from both countries will discuss concrete evidence and case studies to think through what is happening to middle classes during times of economic crisis and globalization. We will identify specific cases that illuminate middle class vulnerability and poverty politics that constitute meaningful comparisons across both countries. For example, Lawson and Jarosz' prior research in the American Northwest found that middle class vulnerability was experienced differently depending on the socio-economic histories of each county. In one context, community leaders acted as gatekeepers, limiting access to local social welfare provisions, whereas in another, they operated as economic development boosters who built local economies through attracting low-wage jobs. In other places middle classes actors engaged with non-governmental organizations, public-private alliances, labor unions and social movements dedicated to addressing impoverishment. The goal of our discussions will be to identify case study places and middle class groups that will allow for comparative analysis of our central research questions.

*Goal #2: design our relational comparison methodology (days 4-5).* We employ relational comparison (Roy, 2003; Hart, 2006) to interrogate the initial assumptions and hypotheses that Argentinean and U.S. researchers bring to this work. We employ this methodology because we argue that poverty is fully understood only through an exploration of the relationships between places and between the poor and non-poor (Lawson, Jarosz and Bonds, 2008; O'Connor, 2002). This comparative approach explores the theoretical openings and closures that frame (and potentially limit) our key concepts in each place. While sociologists and political theorists on our team bring expertise in questions of social stratification and social cohesion, geographers are at the forefront of relational comparison, a methodological innovation that involves in-depth research within each country, but also goes beyond comparison of two separate cases (see for example Jarosz, 1996; Freidburg, 1996; Massey, 2005, Katz, 2004). This approach builds understandings within each research site and simultaneously uses those insights to pose conceptual and empirical questions about each other. In addition, this analytical framework incorporates material and symbolic processes operating at a range of geographic scales, that come together to shape middle class politics in particular ways in places, rather than focusing only on the local scale. Through linked, comparative international research, we will explore how our central concepts such as: middle classes, poverty, vulnerability and poverty alleviation are framed in both countries. We will discuss how our key concepts are shaped both by the places in which they occur and in the relationships between the United States and Argentina.

## **Meeting 2: Spring 2011 (five days)**

Meeting #2, also at the University of Buenos Aires will reunite our team of faculty and graduate students. We will focus on research design, securing access to data sources in Argentina, selecting and visiting specific research sites, designing primary data collection strategies for both the Argentinean and U.S. case studies and discussing analysis and representation of quantitative and qualitative data and analyses. Again, our



interdisciplinarity is a substantial advantage. Sociologists and political theorists bring social modeling and familiarity with measurement and data on employment, social class, political cohesion and difference, and geographers bring facility with analyses that cut across geographical scales (continental, national and urban scales) and also expertise in geo-visualization.

*Goal #1: review currently existing data on middle classes, economic vulnerability and poverty (days 1-2).* We will identify quantitative global, national and city scale data on where the middle classes are and how they are changing. We will dedicate time to examining:

- What already-existing data can be used for comparative international research on poverty and the middle classes? (For what places, for what phenomena, and at what resolution?)
- What are the possibilities and limitations of these existing data and conventional forms of quantitative and spatial analysis? That is, what can be shown and understood using these data and techniques, and as importantly, what important relationships, phenomena, and processes *cannot* be represented or understood?
- What new representational and analytical innovations can help address these silences, to strengthen research on the middle classes and poverty? We are particularly interested in the potential of geo-visualization techniques and technologies to enable integrated qualitative, quantitative and cartographic analyses, as well as ways of ‘scaling up’ qualitative methods for large comparative international research initiatives.

*Goal #2: identify data needs, research methods and research sites to be employed for answering our four research questions* (refined during meeting 1; days 3-5). For each of these four questions, we will draw on the expertise of particular team members. Each sub-group will identify existing data and design the appropriate research approach to collect additional data – through secondary data analysis, in-depth interviewing, case studies and so on. In addition, the larger research project will integrate Argentinean and US researchers into the empirical research teams in both countries. This will allow us to i) draw on in-depth place-knowledge in each research site and ii) cross-check concepts and empirical approaches drawing on ‘outsider’ knowledge for each place.

*Question 1:* How are middle class groups experiencing recent economic crises in the U.S. and Argentina? How can we robustly analyze middle class vulnerability (in terms of food security, employment stability, access to education, health care)? *Lead researchers:* Atilio Boron, Leif Jensen, Rebecca Burnett.

*Question 2:* How do middle class people understand impoverishment and the poor at home and afar, and how does this vary in terms of gender, race, age and vulnerability/security? How do understandings of impoverishment vary as middle class people face similar pressures to the poor (e.g around education, health care, food security and so on)? *Lead researchers:* Alberto Cimadamore, Vicky Lawson, Monica Farias.

*Question 3:* How are cultural and economic processes mutually intertwined and embedded in places (in geographies and economic histories) to produce *both* certain

cultural understandings of poverty *and* certain kinds of outcomes in terms of perpetuating or transforming poverty? *Lead researchers:* Sarah Elwood, Susana Murillo, Maria Biocca.

*Question 4:* Where, through what mechanisms and under what circumstances do middle classes define themselves in opposition to, or in solidarity with the poor? What role do middle classes play in blocking, initiating or catalyzing poverty alleviation? *Lead researchers:* Asun St. Clair, Lucy Jarosz, Dena Aufseeser

### **Broader Impacts of this project**

This project includes both doctoral students and faculty who will be developing new understandings of how underserved groups in Argentina and the U.S. are economically and symbolically marginalized and what sorts of policies are effective in response. This interdisciplinary group from the U.S. and Argentina includes sociologists, geographers and political scientists. The U.S. graduate students are women from diverse economic backgrounds who will have an invaluable educational opportunity, being involved in the creation of substantive research and learning how to engage in international collaboration. Concretely, this planning process will result in a major grant proposal to the NSF Geography and Spatial Sciences Program (and NORAD) for collaborative research in the U.S. and Argentina.

In terms of broader impacts, this planning process and subsequent research will involve both doctoral students and mid-career faculty. All team-members will benefit from cross-cultural exposure to collaborative, international research. Graduate students who have been involved in Lawson's prior NSF-funded research have participated in all aspects of the research process; field work, presenting research at meetings, co-authoring journal articles and completing graduate degrees that were substantively informed by this research involvement – this will also be the case in this project. Further, all team members will benefit more broadly from membership and active involvement in the Critical Global Poverty Studies Group which Lawson leads. This international research network of poverty scholars organizes and participates in international conferences (under the auspices of the CROP Network, UNESCO) and members are also developing new undergraduate and graduate courses on poverty studies. Further, CGPS research and educational activities address issues of diversity through their focus on questions of social class, race, age and gender intersections for understanding poverty processes. Finally, CGPS provides institutional support for professional and public dissemination through their websites, extensive contacts with scholars across the Americas, Europe and beyond, as well as through their publications.

## **Participant List:**

AUFSEESER, Dena, Female, United States, **PhD candidate** in Geography, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.

BIOCCA, Maria, Female, Argentina, **doctoral student in Political Science**, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

BORON, Atilio, Male, Argentina, **Professor of Political Theory**, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

BURNETT, Rebecca, Female, United States, **PhD candidate in Geography**, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.

CIMADAMORE, Alberto. Male, Argentina, **Professor of Social Sciences**, University of Buenos Aires and Coordinator of International Relations of Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), Argentina.

ELWOOD, Sarah, Female, United States, **Associate Professor of Geography**, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.

FARIAS, Monica, Female, Argentina, **doctoral student in Geography**, University of Washington, Seattle (without charge to this grant), U.S.

JAROSZ, Lucy, Female, United States, **Associate Professor of Geography**, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.

JENSEN, Leif, Male, United States, **Professor of Rural Sociology and Demography**, Pennsylvania State University, U.S.

LAWSON, Victoria, Female, UK, **Professor of Geography** and Co-Convener of the Critical Global Poverty Studies Group, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.

LERA ST.CLAIR, Asuncion, Female, Spain, **Professor of Sociology**, Scientific Director of CROP (Comparative Research on Poverty Network) and Co-Convener of the Critical Global Poverty Studies Network, University of Bergen (without charge to this grant), Norway.

MURILLO, Susana, Female, Argentina, **Professor of Social Sciences**, University of Buenos Aires. Murillo is a researcher within the Gino Germani Institute of the Social Sciences at University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.