

THE JUST WORD



THE IGNACIO MARTÍN-BARÓ FUND FOR MENTAL HEALTH & HUMAN RIGHTS

Supporting Community-based Activism for Mental Health and Human Rights

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FROM CONFUSION TO COMPLEXITY

INTERVIEW WITH CARLOS MARTÍN BERISTAIN, MD, PhD

Luis Sandoval

The Maya taught me that things are not divided in this life. That everything has to do with everything.

Carlos Martín Beristain began his work as an activist in the Basque Region of Spain. When he was 18 he decided not to register for his obligatory military service but instead to confront the militarism that dominated Spain at the time. More recently he has continued this work in Spain and worked in Central and South America with communities affected by war and state repression. In Guatemala he coordinated the Interdiocesan Report, *Recovery of Historical Memory: Never Again*. He is author of multiple publications on psychosocial trauma and community-based healing including, most recently, *Humanitarian Aid Work: A Critical Approach* (U. of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). The following are excerpts from an interview with Carlos that



Dr. Carlos Martín Beristain

took place during his visit to Boston College in March of 2007.

Luis: Why did you begin your work in Latin America?

Carlos: I began my work with victims of torture because torture is

something that had always pained me; it created deep convulsions within me. So it was in El Salvador and in Guatemala [in 1989] where together with Ignacio Martín-Baró and other colleagues I worked to develop new theoretical-practical intervention models with communi-

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ties affected by war, by torture, by violence, and by terror. We both agreed that existing psychosocial models were insufficient and inadequate to understand the impact of violence in these communities.

Luis: What are the mechanisms of repression used against these communities? And what are the mechanisms of resilience that characterize the communities' responses?

Carlos: One of the principal forms of social repression is fear, and this is capable of generating distrust, social ruptures, and confusion, etc. within the social web. The first thing that one has to do is to look for ways of confronting this fear. For example, one of the first times I was working with Mayan communities I asked them what had helped them to confront this situation. They told me, *When one understands the face of repression then one can better confront it.*

Another example was in the north of Colombia with a group called *Justice and Peace* in communities that were very beaten down and remote, with a strong paramilitary control, and where several weeks earlier there had been massacres. The paramilitary were going to go to the villages with a cow to feed the survivors of the massacre as a strategy to legitimate their power ... but the community knew this, and got up at two in the morning to prepare food for themselves, so that when the paramilitary arrived with the cow, they said, *What a shame, but we already have food... you can take your cow away.*

This shows a form of resistance which can seem very small, but marks the difference between a *life project* and a *death project* in this situation. It is an

example of how a community sustains a fire beneath the ashes. It demonstrates an attitude of resistance



Dr. Carlos Martín Beristain

to power, even if it is only in a socially limited space. I believe that, even in the worst situations, that hopelessness is too high a price to pay for people who have such a strong desire to live.

Luis: And how were these forms of power that affect communities constructed?

Carlos: All forms of power are constructed through aggression, but they also require legitimacy. Aggression and violence alone do not legitimate power.

For example, when I went to work with AfroColombian communities I asked them, *What has helped you to confront this violence?* They answered, *What has helped us is being organized; the organization has helped us defend ourselves in the midst of this conflict; without it, it would not have been possible.* And also, *And among ourselves we have those who sing to the people; music has served to console us.* Some refer to this as *the hour that we cherish.* This shows how people create spaces for collective expression, to create the capacity to affirm life.

To give meaning to what is happen-

ing helps one move **from confusion to complexity.**

Confusion is a repressive strategy and a negative mental state for confronting situations. Communities who have been more able to confront this situation are those that have understood the complexity and see how to take advantage of the spaces in order to act. This opens a space for developing strategies for mutual help.

It seems more and more important to me to have strategies in psychosocial work or in community resistance; it is not so much that one has to develop lots of actions, but rather to construct strategies that allow one to collectively defend a civilian space in the midst of conflict.

Luis: Based on your experience, What can one do for children in these communities that have suffered such violence, war, death, and poverty?

Carlos: With respect to children, it is a common idea to think that they don't know what is going on, similar to the tendency to think that children are passive victims. I believe that it is very important that children have their own spaces, and trusting relations with significant adults among them. For example, in a workshop with a group of displaced women in Colombia that was focused on helping children better confront their fear, one of the mothers in the group asked a child who was in the workshop, *Marcela, listen, what do you think we should do to better help children confront their fear?*

Marcela answered, *First, parents should not hit children when the parents become anxious; it is better to speak*

DE LA CONFUSIÓN A LA COMPLEJIDAD

ENTREVISTA CON CARLOS MARTÍN BERISTAIN, MD, PhD

Luis Sandoval

Los mayas me enseñaron que las cosas no están tan separadas en la vida. Que todo tiene que ver con todo.

Carlos Martín Beristain comenzó su trabajo como activista en el País Vasco de España. A la edad de 18 años decidió no enroscarse en el servicio militar obligatorio, confrontando así el militarismo que en ese entonces dominaba a España. Recientemente, ha continuado este trabajo en España y en Centro y Sur América con comunidades afectadas por guerra y por represión estatal. En Guatemala coordinó el Informe Inter-diocesano, *Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica: Nunca Más*. Es autor de múltiples publicaciones sobre el trauma psicosocial y apoyo mutuo comunitaria, incluyendo su más reciente publicación, *Trabajo de ayuda humanitaria: Un acercamiento crítico* (U. of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). Los siguientes párrafos son extractos de la entrevista con Carlos, realizada en su visita a la universidad de Boston College en marzo del 2007.

Luis: ¿Por qué empezaste tu trabajo en Latinoamérica?

Carlos: Yo empecé a trabajar con víctimas de tortura, ya que la tortura es algo que siempre me ha dolido, y me convulsiona mucho por dentro. Así que es en El Salvador y Guatemala [en 1989] donde junto con Ignacio Martín-Baró y otros colegas trabajé para desarrollar nuevos modelos teórico-prácticos de intervención en comunidades afectadas por la guerra, la tortura, violencia y terror. Ambos coincidíamos que los modelos psi-

cológicos existentes eran insuficientes e inadecuados para entender el impacto de la violencia en las comunidades.

Luis: ¿Cuáles son los mecanismos de represión que se ejercen sobre las comunidades? ¿Y cuáles los mecanismos de resiliencia que caracterizan las respuestas de las comunidades?

Carlos: Uno de los principales medios de represión social es el miedo, y éste, es capaz de generar desconfianza, ruptura, confusión, etc. Lo primero que hay que hacer, es buscar las maneras para enfrentar el miedo. Por ejemplo: una de las primeras veces que trabajé con unas comunidades mayas les pregunté sobre lo que les había ayudado a enfrentar esta situación. Ellos me respondieron, *Cuando se entiende cuál es la cara de la represión, entonces se enfrenta mejor.*

Otro ejemplo fue en el norte de Colombia con el grupo *Justicia y Paz* en unas comunidades muy golpeadas y alejadas, con un fuerte control paramilitar, y que hacía semanas que habían sido masacrados. Los paramilitares iban a llegar con una vaca para darles alimentación a la comunidad que habían masacrado como parte de una estrategia para legitimar su poder... como la comunidad lo sabía, se levantaron a las dos de la mañana para preparar la comida, así que cuando los paramilitares llegaron con la vaca, les dijeron, *Que pena, pero ya tenemos alimentación... se pueden llevar la vaca.*

Esto muestra una forma de resistencia que puede parecer muy pequeña, pero marca la diferencia entre un *proyecto de vida* y un *proyecto de muerte* en esta situación. Es un ejemplo de cómo se mantiene el fuego de bajo de la

ceniza. Muestra una actitud de resistencia ante el poder, aunque sea en un espacio social limitado. Creo que, incluso en las peores situaciones, la desesperanza es un precio demasiado caro para la gente que tiene tantas ganas de vivir.

Luis: ¿Y cómo se construyen estas formas de poder que afectan a las comunidades?

Carlos: Todas las formas de poder se construyen en base a agresión, pero necesitan también una parte de legitimación. Solo la agresión y la violencia no legitiman.

Por ejemplo, cuando fui a trabajar con las comunidades afrocolombianas les pregunté, *¿A ustedes qué les ha ayudado a enfrentar la violencia?* Ellos respondieron, *Lo que a nosotros nos ha servido es estar organizados, la organización nos ha servido para poder defendernos en medio del conflicto, sino nos hubiera sido imposible.* Y también, *Y entre nosotros hay quienes le cantan a la gente, la música nos ha servido como una forma de consuelo.* A eso le llaman, *la hora sabrosa.* Esto muestra como la gente crea espacios de expresión colectiva, para darse la capacidad de afirmar la vida.

Dar sentido a lo que esta pasando ayuda a **pasar de la confusión a la complejidad.** La confusión es una estrategia represiva y un estado mental muy negativo para poder enfrentar las situaciones. Las comunidades que mejor han podido enfrentar esta situación, son aquellas que han podido entender cuál es la complejidad y ver cómo aprovechar los espacios para hacer cosas. Esto abre el espacio para desarrollar estrategias de apoyo mutuo.

Cada vez me parece más importante

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en el trabajo psicosocial o en el trabajo de resistencia comunitaria tener estrategia, no se trata de hacer muchas acciones, sino se trata de construir estrategias que te permitan defender un espacio civil en medio del conflicto en forma colectiva.

Luis: Desde su experiencia, ¿Qué es lo que habría que hacer con los niños y las niñas de estas comunidades que han sufrido tanta violencia, guerras, muertes, pobreza?

Carlos: Con respecto a los niños y las niñas, es muy común la idea de que ellos nunca se enteran de lo que está pasando, así como también existe una tendencia a pensar que los niños y las niñas son víctimas pasivas. Creo que es muy importante que los niños y niñas tengan sus propios espacios, y relaciones de confianza con adultos significativos. Por ejemplo, en un taller con un grupo de mujeres

desplazadas en Colombia sobre cómo ayudar a los niños a enfrentar mejor el miedo, una de las mamás presente en el grupo le preguntó a una niña que estaba en el taller. *¿Oye Marcela, tú qué crees que hay que hacer para ayudar mejor a los niños para enfrentar el miedo?* Y Marcela respondió, *Primero, que los papás no nos tienen que pegar cuando se ponen nerviosos, es mejor que hablen entre ellos; y segundo, que nos tienen que responder, porque nosotros preguntamos muchas cosas, pero preguntamos para saber si es verdad lo que ya sabemos.*

No se puede aislar a los niños y las niñas de la comunidad como si fueran un elemento aparte. Pero si se necesita hacer un trabajo específico con ellos.

Los niños y las niñas necesitan comunicación, distensión, juego, expresión, así como también ayudarles a

entender y a contrastar lo que ellos saben con adultos significativos. Hay que favorecer espacios de seguridad, reconstruir una cierta cotidianidad que permita una contención emocional, y no dejar avanzar la desestructuración....

Luis: ¿Cuál es el rol que juegan los niños en estas comunidades?

Carlos: Los niños y las niñas ayudan a superar estereotipos, son la esperanza y el futuro de la comunidad, y le dan un sentido de valor a la gente. Y a todos nos ayudan a ver que no somos los dueños del tiempo. ♦

Carlos actualmente es co-director del Diploma Universitario Salud Mental en Situaciones de Catástrofe y Guerra, IEPALA/Universidad de Complutense y profesor en Ayuda Humanitaria Internacional, Universidad de Deusto.



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among themselves; and second, adults need to respond to us, because we ask many things but we ask in order to learn if what we know is the truth.

One can't isolate children in the community as if they were a separate element. But one has to work specifically with them.

Children need communication, relaxation, play, expression, in addition to help in understanding and in contrasting what they learn from the significant adults in their lives. One

has to foster secure places, to reconstruct a certain everydayness that provides them with emotional containment and prevents them from "falling apart"...

One has to provide spaces that facilitate self-expression and spaces that enable them to resignify the traumatic events.

Luis: What is the role of children in these communities?

Carlos: Children help to overcome

stereotypes and also are the hope and the future of the community; and they give the people a reason to value their own worth. And for all of us they help us to see that we are not the guardians of time. ♦

Carlos is currently co-director of the Post-graduate Mental Health Degree in Situations of Catastrophe and War, IEPALA/University of Complutense and professor of International Humanitarian Aid, University of Deusto.

Many of our readers signed the web-based petition organized by the Ignacio Martín-Baró Fund for Mental Health and Human Rights urging the American Psychological Association to further investigate alleged participation of psychologists in torture and other cruel and unusual behaviors in Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib. We further urged that they reconsider the relation between their code of ethics and international human rights law. Below we update recent activities within APA for our readership. The struggle continues.

Christina Cipriano

August 10th 2006 - The American Psychological Association (APA) released a public statement that the APA Council has approved a resolution reaffirming the organization's "absolute opposition to all forms of torture and abuse, regardless of the circumstance". This press release comes in response to recent public allegations that the APA has been tacitly consenting to alleged and confirmed psychologists' involvement in interrogations in Guantánamo.

Although torture is centuries old – and widely condemned in the international arena – it was not until pictures appeared of female military personnel sexually assaulting handcuffed detainees in humiliating positions before gawking U.S. soldiers that the U.S. public became concerned. What motivated many citizens and mental health professionals to investigate further the growing reports of U.S. involvement in questionable interrogations was learning more about the nature of detainees at Guantánamo and their treatment. Soldz (2006) reported that "...this treatment was condemned as an illegal violation of human rights by

numerous international organizations including the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Committee Against Torture, the European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Amnesty International," but not the United States. What persuaded me was reading that during a short break at the 2006 meeting of the United Nations Committee Against Torture, "a small group changed some minor wording based on the Council debate" (Soldz, 2006), thereby protecting the types of torture historically used by the CIA and, more recently, by the American military in Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib.

Public and professional criticism was expressed in a series of symposia at the APA convention last August in New Orleans as well as conversations at the mid-winter gatherings of the APA leadership and representatives from all of its divisions. More symposia are planned for this summer's APA convention in San Francisco.

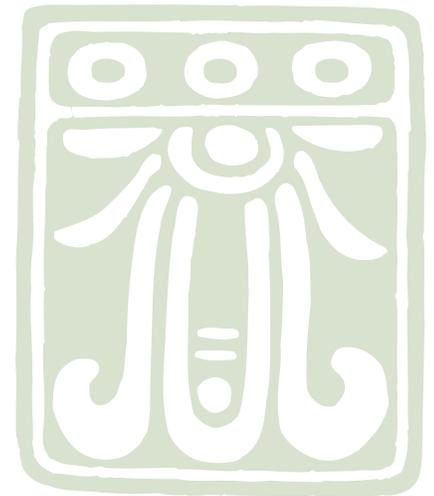
Significantly, the Executive Committee of the Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology Division 48 of the APA approved a statement which has been supported by other individuals and divisions in APA, calling on the APA to adopt a Moratorium Resolution on Psychologist's Involvement in Interrogations at U.S. Detention Centers for Foreign Detainees and Individuals Identified as "Enemy Combatants" under the Military Commissions Act of 2006 (see www.webster.edu/peacepsychology/2007Moratorium/MoratoriumStatement07.html). The APA Council will vote on a similar resolution introduced by Neil Altman at its Council meeting

in August, 2007.

As Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of dedicated people can change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever has". ♦

Soldz, S. (2006) *Protecting the Torturers: Bad Faith and Distortions from the American Psychological Association*. www.dissidentvoice.org, September 13, 2006.

Christina Cipriano is a PhD student in Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology at Boston College and is currently completing the Certificate in Human Rights and International Justice at BC.



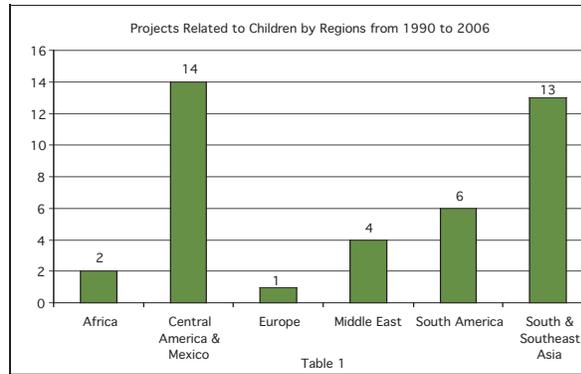
SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS OF WAR AND STATE VIOLENCE: A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW

Luis Sandoval

The mission of the Ignacio Martín-Baró Fund for Mental Health and Human Rights (MBF) is to promote mental health, social consciousness, active resistance, and progressive social change in communities affected by institutional violence, oppression and social injustices such as civil war, poverty, international war, community violence, and natural disasters.

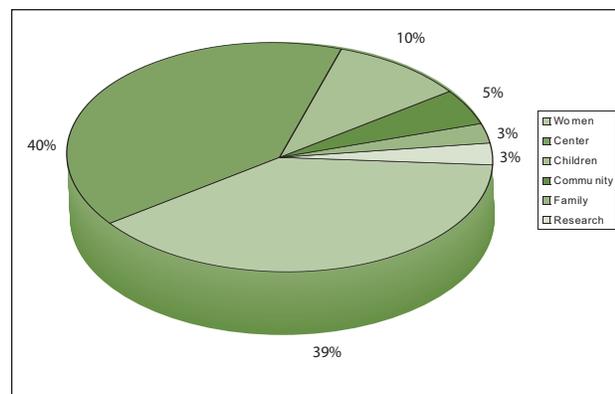
The Martín-Baró Fund has supported 129 grassroots projects around the world since 1990 at an estimated contribution of \$6000 per project. The financial aid provided by MBF has been used in a variety of ways to support the organization's efforts to develop innovative-interventions with individuals, groups, and the community at large, as well as to provide critical awareness and education about oppressive U.S. policies and practices and their root causes. Examples of these projects include: training of community-based mental health and health promoters; human rights and social justice workshops for children and women; development and/or construction of community centers, libraries, and other social service resources that benefit children and their families.

MBF has supported projects that address these overall goals through a variety of means. Forty projects, that is, nearly a third (31%) of the financial support provided by the MBF between 1990 and 2006, supported projects that enhance the lives of children affected by war and structural violence, including extreme poverty. The table and chart presented here help us to visualize the MBF's support of children and their families.



There has been considerable diversity among the forty projects and programs developed by our grantees to support children and their families. The pie chart graphically displays that diversity.

Forty percent (40%) of the projects supporting children have focused on creating or sustaining physical spaces for children, for example, community or children's centers and the programs developed within these spaces. Children receive medical, nutritional, and psychological resources and can also play and interact with other children. In some of these projects children are organized in self-help programs and older children assist in the care of younger children. Finally, in many projects children are engaged in dramatic play and/or theatre activities through which they educate and organize other children in their communities.



Thirty-nine percent (39%) of the grants supporting children have focused on training children's mothers and grandmothers to better care for and educate them within their families and communities. Included in this group are education programs through which mothers educate themselves and others about children's basic health needs, human rights, and educational needs and rights.

Ten percent (10%) of the funds supporting children provide direct mental health and medical services. An additional three percent (3%) of these resources have assisted families as a group and five percent (5%), the entire community. In both of these cases children are indirectly supported as members of the community.

Finally, three percent (3%) of these funds have been invested in community-based and/or participatory research projects exploring the impact of war and extreme poverty on the social and psychological well-being of children.

Many of the projects funded by the MBF support women and communities, reflecting a more community-based and collectivistic rather than individualistic way of life. Thus support for the psychosocial well-being of children in these communities is more likely to be delivered through their mothers and community organizations and projects than individually. ♦

WOMEN WARRIORS

Center for Immigrant Families exhibit featured at Boston College Center for Human Rights and International Justice event honoring the lifetime achievements of Ignacio Martín-Baró and the work of the Martín-Baró Fund.

M. Brinton Lykes

An exhibition of photography and stories by the women of the Center for Immigrant Families was the centerpiece of an event held on Wednesday, April 25, 2007 at Boston College in which the Ignacio Martín-Baró Fund for Mental Health and Human Rights accepted a posthumous life time achievement award given to Ignacio Martín-Baró, SJ, PhD. The award was given by the American Psychological Association's Division of Peace and Conflict. The event was sponsored by the Boston College Center for Human Rights and International Justice (www.bc.edu/humanrights) and was attended by approximately 100 students, faculty, and community members.

Among featured guests at the event was Dr. Herbert Kelman, Professor Emeritus of Harvard

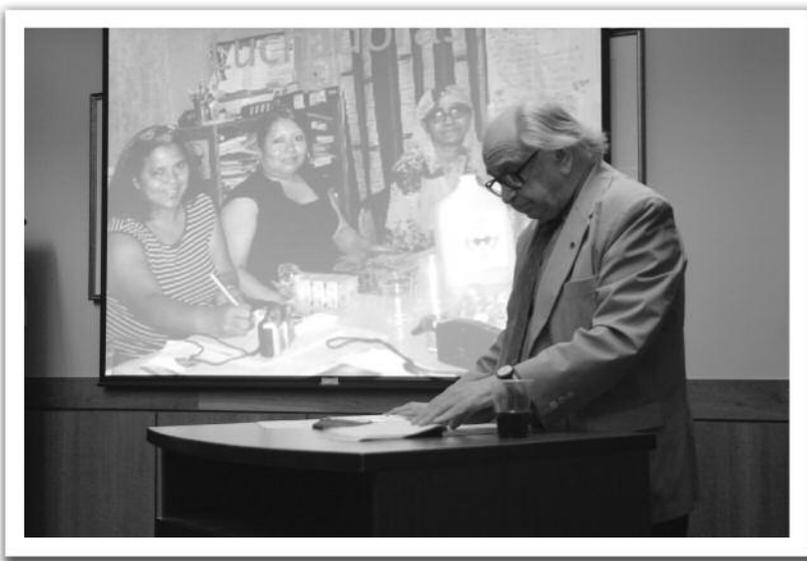


Members of the Center for Immigrant Families and of the MBF

University. Dr. Kelman is an active member of the Division of Peace and Conflict of the American Psychological Association. He hosted Ignacio Martín-Baró at Harvard University in February of 1989 and described the significant contributions that Martín-Baró made to critical and applied social psychology, as well as to the peacemaking processes

in El Salvador. In addition to his work as head of the psychology department and academic dean at the University of Central America in El Salvador, Martín-Baró worked in the parish community of Jayaque and directed the university's survey research center. His use of surveys created opportunities for the voices of those not typically heard in Salvadoran media to reach centers of power. As significantly, he published a wide range of studies on the war, its effects on children, a critical analysis of the fatalism of the Salvadoran peasant, etc. The Martín-Baró Fund was established in 1990 to continue his vision by supporting community-based responses to war and social transformation in the wake of war.

Four members of the Center for Immigrant Families, whose work over the past two years has been supported, in part, by the Martín-Baró Fund, traveled from New York to present their exhibit and to describe the Center's collaborative literacy and empowerment program. The women displayed photographs of their daily



Dr. Herbert Kelman

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SIX PROJECTS FUNDED FOR 2007

Maria De Jesus

This year the Martín-Baró Fund has decided to support a new group in Chiapas, México. In addition, five groups that had been supported by the Martín-Baró Fund in 2006 were asked to submit renewal proposals to receive funding for this year. Each of these grassroots organizations addresses the human rights and mental health needs of the communities they serve. The six groups are described below.

PROYECTO DE CAPACITACIÓN EN SALUD MENTAL COMUNITARIA Y ACOMPAÑAMIENTO PSICOSOCIAL, CHIAPAS, MÉXICO, \$5,000



Chiapas, México is a state that is mostly populated by indigenous communities who are extremely marginalized. The conditions of poverty and marginalization led to the formation of the indigenous political group, EZLN in 1994 and other autonomous community-based organizations supported by the Zapatistas. Rather than responding to the demands of these indigenous groups the Mexican government is waging low intensity warfare through paramilitary groups. With the grant received from the Martín-Baró Fund, the Proyecto plans to continue a project to train indigenous, community-based mental health promoters in community mental health, psychosocial support/accompaniment, and detecting and addressing human rights violations. The training workshops focus on: recognizing low-intensity warfare, engaging in crisis intervention, gaining tools to facilitate mutual support groups, evaluating the mental health needs of community members, and addressing alcoholism and domestic violence.

KOMISYON FANM VIKTIM pou VIKTIM (KOFVIV) PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI, \$7,000

Haitians living in Port-au-Prince have experienced unprecedented violence and have been victim to massive violations of their rights. Women participating in the Commission of Women Victims for Victims have experienced the trauma of rape and many have also had husbands, partners, children or other family members brutally killed. With the grant from the Martín-Baró Fund, KOFVIV offered psychosocial support activities to these women victims of violence. KOFVIV has also provided training to community-based human rights workers. In the summer of 2007, KOFVIV will hold community Open Space sessions on the mental health impact of human rights violations on poor communities. These Open Space activities will focus on the impact of violence in individual communities and will serve as a space for the women to begin to reach beyond their peer groups and talk with others about how violence has affected women in particular.



ASOCIACIÓN CENTRO DE EDUCACIÓN Y FORMACIÓN MAYA IXIL (ACEFOMI), SAN GASPAR DE CHAJUL, GUATEMALA, \$7,000



The Martín-Baró Fund renewed its grant to the Center for Mayan Ixil Education and Development, which works with youth and women in Chajul and its surrounding rural villages, an area profoundly affected by more than thirty-six years of civil war and poverty. This year's grant will serve to reinforce the work that the women have done in the community. They will hold multiple workshops in each of five identified indigenous communities. The workshops will address mental health and human rights issues, analyze the problems that led to the armed conflict and its psychological effects on the community members, and focus on

how to minimize negative risk affecting youth and women.

SIX PROJECTS FUNDED FOR 2007

CENTRO BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR, \$7,000

The Martín-Baró Fund also renewed its grant to Centro Bartolomé de las Casas, which works with local communities on economic, social, psychosocial, and spiritual development.

Centro Bartolomé de las Casas reports that they have achieved their primary objective for 2006, which was to accompany the communities in the northeast region of El Salvador in exhumation processes, open the *Museo de la Memoria* [Museum of Memory], and create a book to document survivors' testimonies. Both the inauguration of the museum and the launching of the book took place on May 27, 2007. With this year's grant from the Martín-Baró Fund, the Center hopes to continue working with a local group of survivors in the

northeast region and to provide psychosocial support to relatives and survivors of the exhumations. In addition, the Center hopes to further develop the museum by gathering objects of war, documents, and other evidence.



CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION CENTER (CRC) QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES, \$7,000



The human rights situation is deteriorating in the Philippines as economic conditions worsen. From 2001 to May 2006, the CRC documented 215,233 child victims of human rights violations. Out of this number, 54 children and 4 unborn babies were killed, 106 witnessed the killings of their parents, 17 were politically detained and tortured, 3 were raped by the military, and almost 200,000 fled from their communities and were forcibly displaced by the military operations in their communities. In the past year, the CRC continued to provide community-based psychosocial services for displaced families relocated in Montalban, Rizal. This year's grant will allow the CRC to continue service delivery for the displaced families as well as for child political prisoners. In addition, the Center will continue the arts workshops for children.

CENTER FOR IMMIGRANT FAMILIES (CIF) NEW YORK CITY, U.S., \$7,000

The Center for Immigrant Families focuses on the needs of low-income immigrant women of color, using a popular education model which emphasizes the importance of people's own knowledge, experiences, histories, and cultures. In the past year CIF engaged in significant outreach to women in the Lower Manhattan Valley and continued to work towards CIF's mission of promoting psychological well-being, health, development, and organizing for justice among low-income immigrant women of color. With this year's grant, CIF will continue to further leadership development and organizing among low-income immigrant women of color. In addition, CIF will continue to maintain strong relationships with community institutions, particularly schools and Head Start centers, through a two-part workshop series that will use exercises, poetry, discussions, and "Theater of the Oppressed" to engage participants in a reflection process about the issues and needs in the community that CIF serves.



MURDER IN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION CENTER

Isabel Lanada

At his young age, Andy Barbas, 10 years old, is a marked man. He was witness to the murder of his older brother, Jobert, and his father, a habal-habal (tricycle) driver and an active member of ANAKPAWIS Partylist.

At about 3 a.m. on July 3, 2005, armed men, believed to be government soldiers, entered the house where Andy's father, Andrino, his brother Jobert, and four younger brothers were sleeping. The men, wearing, fatigue uniforms and combat boots, mercilessly sprayed bullets at them, instantly killing Andrino and Jobert and wounding Andy in the chest. Fortunately, Jenny, their mother, and their two sisters were attending a celebration in a nearby town and so were spared the bloodbath.



They and the surviving boys transferred from place to place until they came to Manila and were temporarily sheltered by the Children's Rehabilitation Center (CRC), a Martín-Baró Fund grantee. They were part of the many internal refugee families from Eastern Visayas forced to relocate to Manila for their security.

CRC made it possible for the Barbas children to receive psychosocial therapy to help them process their experience. Particular focus was given to Andy, who witnessed the horrendous crime. As a family, they underwent grief processing.

The family has been separated to meet the needs of the children since the mother still has no stable source of income. CRC helped facilitate the transfer of the three youngest children to a home that provides not only shelter, but also continuous education. The organization found places for the widowed mother, Andy, and the other children at another orphanage. ♦

Isabel Lanada is the former executive director of the CRC.



Editors: Maria De Jesus, M. Brinton Lykes, Luis Sandoval. **Contributors:** Christina Cipriano, Maria De Jesus, Isabel Lanada, M. Brinton Lykes, Catherine Mooney, Luis Sandoval. A special thanks to Erzulie Coquillon, Maria De Jesus, Cynthia Kennedy, Joan Liem, Ramsay Liem, M. Brinton Lykes, Catherine Mooney, Jaime Sandoval, and Luis Sandoval for editing and translation assistance. **PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WORK.** Letters, inquiries, contributions can be sent to: **Martín-Baró Fund**, P.O. Box 2122, Jamaica Plain, MA, 02130, www.martinbarofund.org. Checks payable to: FEX/Martín-Baró Fund, tax deductible to the full extent permitted by IRS code. Thank you.

lives as mothers, grandmothers, workers, and community members, alongside short descriptive stories. In keeping with Ignacio Martín-Baró's work in communities in El Salvador, these women are "build[ing] upon the multiple identities and roles [that] immigrant women play – as caregivers, economic providers, and the glue that holds their communities together – and [finding]...a way to make women's voices central to the struggles for justice in their communities, and, through collective action, to enhance [their] overall well-being" (see www.martinbarofund.org/newsletter/pdf_files/fall06.pdf). In the past year, through its outreach programs to women in the Lower Manhattan Valley neighborhood of New York City, the Center for Immigrant Families has expanded its membership and continued to work toward promoting psychological well-being, health, development, and organizing for justice among low-income immigrant women of color, many of whom have come to the U.S. from countries deeply affected by the wars of recent decades.

In the volume of his edited work, *Writings for a Liberation Psychology*, (Adrienne Aron and Shawn Corne, editors, Harvard University Press, 1994), Ignacio Martín-Baró wrote:

War implies social polarization, the displacement of groups toward opposite extremes. A critical split is produced in

the framework of coexistence, leading to a radical differentiation between "them" and "us"...People, actions and things are no longer valued in and of themselves... Thus the basis for daily interaction disappears.

Without doubt, of all the deleterious effects of the war on the mental health of the Salvadoran people, the undermining of social relations is the worst, for our social relations are the scaffolding we rely on to construct ourselves historically both as individuals and as a human community.

The work of the Center for Immigrant Families represents this emphasis on rethreading community and enhancing social well-being in the face of trauma and struggle. Martín-Baró's writings have sustained many of us who work in the area of human rights and mental health. The APA's decision to honor his contributions to peacemaking and conflict resolution are another indication of the impact he has had on the field of psychology and beyond. The Martín-Baró Fund was honored to have been chosen as a recipient of a plaque describing his contribution. We at the Martín-Baró Fund are also grateful to the women of the Center for Immigrant Families for their time and willingness to share their experiences with the Boston community through this event. ♦



OUR MISSION & VALUES

OUR MISSION

Through grant-making and education, the Martín-Baró Fund fosters psychological well-being, social consciousness, active resistance, and progressive social change in communities affected by institutional violence, repression and social injustice.

OUR VALUES

- ◆ We believe that the scars of such experiences are deeply seated both in the individual and in society.
- ◆ We believe in the power of the community collectively to heal these wounds, to move forward, and to create change.
- ◆ We believe in the importance of developing education and critical awareness about the oppressive policies and practices of the United States and of multinational corporations.

OUR GOALS

- ◆ To support innovative grassroots projects that explore the power of the community to foster healing within individuals and communities that are trying to recover from experiences of institutional violence, repression, and social injustice.
- ◆ To promote education and critical awareness about the psychosocial consequences of structural violence, repression and social injustice on individuals and communities, while educating ourselves and the wider community about the community-based responses of grantees in their pursuit of social reparation and a more just and equitable world.
- ◆ To build collaborative relationships among the Fund, its grantees, and its contributors for mutual education and social change.

A STRIKING SUCCESS: THIS YEAR'S BOWLATHON NETS \$30,000!



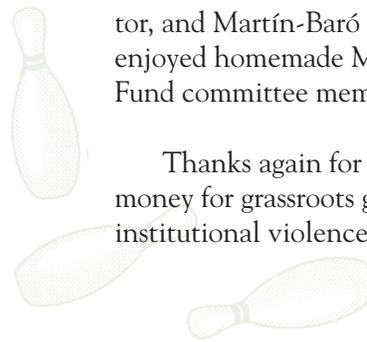
Catherine Mooney

This year's Bowlathon fielded 16 enthusiastic teams and raised in the neighborhood of \$ 30,000—enough money to support our projects for a full year. We want to thank all the bowlers and their many generous sponsors. This year's teams were made up of both new and longtime friends of the Martín-Baró Fund, including many students and faculty from Boston College, Weston Jesuit School of Theology, and the University of Massachusetts-Boston. The BC students stole the limelight with their lime green t-shirts



adorned with “Brinton’s Babes”, a salute to their prof, mentor, and Martín-Baró Fund founder, Brinton Lykes. We enjoyed homemade Mexican cuisine thanks to Martín-Baró Fund committee member Luis Sandoval.

Thanks again for helping us have fun while raising money for grassroots groups who are creatively confronting institutional violence, repression, and social injustice. ♦



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