

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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January 01, 2006

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I wanted to share this poem with you in recognition of your role and that of the center in its inspiration. Touring the center with you as our guide was a profoundly moving and inspiring experience. It made the reality of the political violence I have read about, and heard about in news accounts, real, alive in your story and the stories you shared of those who could no longer speak.

## Program Areas

Special Education

It is impossible to state the value and importance of your openhearted offering. Your willingness to support our learning with no request or expectation for compensation was not only generous but also incredibly moving. Your invitation to share the profoundly painful and awe inspiring journey of Chileans and all those who are persecuted and repressed demands that we engage more responsibly in the world, actively working to stop such violence and to demand accountability from those responsible.

School Psychology

Measurement, Evaluation &  
Research Methodology

Human Learning,  
Development, & Instruction

I hope that the Villa Grimaldi and those of you working so hard to make it a reality continue to get the support (financial and political) that you need in order to ensure its continuation. As a Canadian who enjoys enormous privileges in terms of my access to education, information, and employment opportunities the experience of walking through the center and listening to your stories and those of Isabel Reveco has changed my perspective on my work, and will stay with me forever. The memory of that day motivates me to acknowledge the true responsibility inherent in my work as a researcher, teacher, and therapist — that is the responsibility of participating in whatever ways possible to work towards, and inspire others to work towards, **social change**.

Counselling Psychology

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Thank you so much. The poster you gave each of us hangs in my office proudly, reminding me of you and all those whose courage and vision makes change possible.

Sincerely,

Robin Cox, PhD Candidate  
Registered Clinical Counselor  
Counselling Psychology Program  
Faculty of Education  
University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, Canada V6T 1Z4

Chile: Singing from the Heart

Here with the waves and the pelicans dancing this cold wind,  
I listen, with wine and cigarettes and stray dogs,  
To the heartbeat of our journey together,  
Resonating in the surf's drone.

I see your fists, clenched tight around your pain,  
Loosening into the stories of loss remembered,  
Pain lived, embodied, echoing,  
And unfolding in the space of your shared history.

Open hearted offering, you invite us to share,  
The soul of your country and the story of your resilience,  
And we begin to remember our own suffering, masked by fear  
And the constant motion of living a tomorrow that never arrives.

You walk us through the gates of unimaginable suffering,  
Reciting the names of friends known and unknown,  
With each telling, courageously mending  
This story of internal exile that is your story too.

You lovingly caress the bones of the disappeared,  
Your tender science evoking the stories of their living and dying,  
Offerings to those who wait, frozen in their need  
To hold their presence and their disappearance simultaneously.

You embrace these chronicles of horror and sorrow,  
Gently holding space for memory to survive,  
Offering the strands of your unwavering commitment,  
So that a tapestry of shared healing may be woven.

Like the gate, locked so that no more should have to pass,  
There are things that can no longer be spoken,  
And so you sing them in songs of exile and liberation,  
And live them in wine soaked tears and laughter.

So easy to cover the groundlessness of this experience,  
To think a way out of this discomfort,  
But this is the wordless resting place of kindness,  
And we are silently speaking the poetry of our connection.

On your shores and mountains, my heart breaks open into itself.  
I feel the pulsing of anguished silences and noisy passion  
And I find myself dancing in the intensity of your spirit,  
And softening to the tender brush of your hand against my cheek.

Here where poetry and protest are so entangled  
I see you moving, alone and together, to the music of being alive,  
While we skim the surface, like these seabirds,  
Searching vainly with our heads, for that which can only be sung by the heart.

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