

# LATINX PSYCHOLOGY TODAY

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SEMBRANDO SEMILLAS DE CAMBIO, ESPERANZA Y RESPONSABILIDAD

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Greeting NLPA Members,

I hope you are having an enjoyable summer and are well and safe amid the COVID-19 health pandemic we have all been experiencing. As various areas are now opening up it is important to remember that this pandemic is unprecedented in our lifetime and maintaining our vigilance and self-care is extremely important.

NLPA has been quite busy with an array of activities to enhance our membership and our communities. We will be having our conference this year virtually since that was the preference of the membership. Our conference theme "PA'LANTE: Fostering Health Equity and Policy" is a way for us to keep moving forward while addressing the various challenges we face. The program submissions started June 15 and currently you can now register for the conference at a reduced rate through October 9 through our NLPA website. Sponsorships for this conference are available to help underwrite the expenses and recognize our supporters. I hope you can help us spread the word about our virtual conference to be held on October 15 and 16, 2021 as well as encourage sponsorships to support the conference and its activities. Continuing education units are included in the registration for the entire conference at our reduced rate this year!

There are numerous new activities NLPA has been engaged throughout this year with the management team AMC Source providing important administrative support. NLPA received research funding from the National Urban League to conduct research in two phases on the impact of COVID-19 among the Latinx community throughout the U.S. You should have received the preliminary results of phase one from this project from our talented team of researchers in various universities throughout the U.S. Phase II is in the process of development and we will share some of the information at our NLPA conference in October.



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NLPA has partnered with the various other ethnic psychological associations, Facebook, and the consulting firm Provoc located in Washington, D.C. to launch a mental health wellness campaign for populations of color. This new venture will enable our ethnic and racial communities to access self-help information with healthy tips, ability to ask experts, and provide educational materials for our emotional and mental well-being with an eye on using culturally informed strategies. July 15, 2021 is the anticipated launch date for this campaign in various languages. We hope this is a start for new collaborative efforts in reaching out and being a resource to the general public. Meanwhile, Facebook is donating one million dollars in advertising for the participating associations for their efforts and contributions to this campaign.

As issues emerge NLPA has supported statements on various social justice issues throughout the year, established a formal MOU with the Interamerican Society of Psychology (aka as SIP) in order to foster collaborations with psychologists abroad in Latin America, and has collaborated with the American Psychological Association (APA) on various activities with the other ethnic psychological associations. We have developed collaborations with the National Hispanic Medical Association and intent to reach out to other associations that serve and represent our Latinx communities.

With the help of our management team at AMC Source, our NLPA website is being redesigned and should be online by August 1, 2021 in the hopes of making it easier to access information and to be updated in its design. This new website will house continuing education courses “on demand” to enhance our professional development. In particular, there will be special sections for students and for early career professionals on our new website. We will be posting information about funding opportunities and professional development activities in order for you to be informed and take advantage of these opportunities.

Our journal is doing extremely well and is now producing revenues for the association. Many thanks to our journal editor Esteban Cardemil, PhD and all of the associate editors and reviewers for producing such a wonderful resource for our profession. I encourage you to continue to choose our *Journal of Latinx Psychology* published by APA Publishing for your best work and to keep us in the forefront of the latest information.

NLPA leadership Council has hired consultants, Obsidian Consulting, to assist us in how we are addressing racial diversity and in reviewing our policies. This is a first step for NLPA to do a self-examination especially with regards to Afro-Latinx concerns. We plan to review the recommendations of the consultant’s report and continue these efforts moving forward so that our association is responsive and supportive of our diversities.

Please consider being a part of the leadership of NLPA through the various appointments and elected positions in the association. Meanwhile, thank you so much for your support and engagement in NLPA. I look forward to seeing you at our virtual conference this year.

Eduardo Morales, PhD  
President of the National Latinx Psychological Association

**Eduardo Morales, Ph.D.** is a clinical consulting psychologist, recently retired Distinguished Professor of the PhD Clinical Psychology Program at Alliant international University, has received numerous awards for his contributions from numerous organizations and elected officials throughout his career and is a Fellow of APA, and is Fellow of 12 APA Divisions. He is one of the founders and Executive Director of AGUILAS, an award-winning HIV prevention program for Latinx gay/bisexual men that is the oldest Latinx LGBTQ organization in all of the Americas. He helped found many behavioral health programs, assisted organizations nationally and internationally, received numerous service and research grants, served on numerous committees, and is very active in regional, state, and national organizations. Born and raised in New York City’s Hamilton Heights District of Puerto Rican parents he is an active scholar he has presented at numerous professional conferences and published articles in various psychological journals.

## OUR MISSION

To create a supportive professional community that advances psychological education and training, science, practice, and organizational change to enhance the health, mental health, and well-being of Hispanic/Latinx populations

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## *Y SEGUIMOS PA'LANTE: PLANTING SEEDS OF HOPE & COMPASSION IN A NEW ERA OF ADAPTABILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY & CHANGE*

FIGORELLA L. CARLOS CHAVEZ

### Editorial

We, the NLPA editorial team, are excited to bring you the Spring/Summer 2021 issue of *Latinx Psychology Today* (LPT). 2021 Brings new opportunities and challenges as we learn (or try to learn) to live in a world wherein COVID-19 has forever changed the way we interact and relate with one another. The way we teach, parent, work, study, provide therapy, travel, commute, and greet each has changed during these past 18 months. It is possible that we have changed too in accelerated and unexpected ways. To say that we, our families, and the communities we serve have been resilient during this world pandemic is an understatement of massive proportion. Yet, we may be able to control the way *we respond* to the series of world-life events by planting seeds of hope and compassion for future generations to harvest in the years to come.

The current issue is a collaborative effort of graduate students, early career, mid-career, and established members from NLPA focusing on the theme, **Sembrando Semillas De Cambio, Esperanza Y Responsabilidad** [*Planting Seeds of Change, Hope, and Responsibility*]. In 2021, we have learned that COVID-19 is perhaps here to stay and that adaptability is essential in order

to protect our families, communities, and ourselves. We are making efforts to adapt/adjust to a new “normal.” Whether we embrace this new normality is questionable, yet it is certain that the COVID-19 pandemic has not only surfaced the systemic inequalities and health disparities, but also worsen educational access to our Latinx youth. In our spring/summer 2021 newsletter issue, we highlight the discussion of the following themes: the ways in which our DACA Latinx students still have to “fight” their way in to be included in some spaces, the hope our clinicians share by irradiating openness, shedding light to the mishandled of the pandemic in Brazil, and the road ahead on creating inclusive spaces for our Afro-Latinx members and communities.

In the present newsletter issue, we aim to highlight the essence of our members by creating inclusive spaces that elevate the voices of those who often are not given a platform. We recognize that we are living under extraordinary circumstances and therefore these stories and calls to action are much needed. We present to you Erika Rodriguez, a DACA student in graduate school. She shares her experiences, words of wisdom, and plans for the future as a third year PsyD student. Next, we present Liora



Schneider-Mirmanas, Calbeth Alaribe, and Ogechi Nnwordu's article in *Cultural Humility*. As healthcare professionals, they share why approaching the therapeutic space with a culturally humble stance can help best serve BIPOC populations. Regarding the international experiences of our brothers and sisters in the Americas during COVID-19, Matheus Asmassallan de Souza Ferreira presents black intellectual legacy and testimony of survival in Brazil. To conclude, Dr. Mirella Díaz-Santos shares with us a beautiful poem titled "*Illusions*": *A AfroLatinx Woman and her Wounds*.

*Dr. Fiorella L. Carlos Chavez is an Assistant Professor in the Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation at Arizona State University. She applies qualitative and mixed-methodologies to understand the implications of culture, family, and work-life related stressors on Latino migrant farmworker youth's psychosocial adjustment. She has been nominated twice (2019 and 2021) as the Undergraduate Mentor of the Year at the University of Missouri – Columbia. In 2020, Dr. Chavez received a COVID-19 Needs Assessment grant from the National Urban League; she's focusing on the effects of stress and household food insecurity on Latinx youth and essential workers' mental health.*

Finally, I want to say ¡Muchas Gracias! to the contributors to our Spring/Summer 2021 newsletter, my editorial team for their dedication and hard work in this newsletter and for their patience toward me in this process, the leadership council (LC) for giving us the opportunity to create inclusive spaces and trusting us with this work, and to all our resilient membership community for making LPT a reality.

Fiorella L. Carlos Chavez

Editor

The mission of NLPA is to create a supportive professional community that advances psychological education and training, science, practice, and organizational change to enhance the health, mental health, and well-being of Hispanic/Latinx populations.

The NLPA newsletter fall 2020 edition aims to highlight the essence of our members by creating inclusive spaces that elevates the voices of those who often are not given a platform. We recognize that we are living under extraordinary circumstances and so these stories are much needed.

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# #NLPA2021

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## A DACAMENTED MEXICANA IN GRADUATE SCHOOL

ERIKA RODRIGUEZ<sup>1</sup>

As a DACAmended Mexican woman, I have to fight to even be acknowledged in some spaces. In many spaces, I am told my perspective is “welcomed,” but that is, only until someone gets uncomfortable. I am asked to share more about my target identities, I share about having DACA and the uncertainty of my future under the changing administrations, only to find myself triggered during the next class as one of my classmates decides to wear a homeland security hat.

In my classes, I am “taught” to think about clients’ culture and different target identities. I am “taught” about undocumented immigrants, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and members of low socio-economic status communities. These identities become othered. I sit in class thinking that I identify more with them than I do with the professors “teaching”. I grew up poor, I crossed the border without inspection, I lived until recently in a poor neighborhood, I have DACA, I am many of those identities you are “teaching” me about.

I am then asked how things can be done differently, what do I think needs to happen differently? My emotional labor is exploited, I am left to figure out how to teach white professors how to not ‘other’ students like me. And after giving some ideas, I am told they will run them by their supervisor and never hear back. And all my free

labor, my exhaustion, go nowhere other than an already tall pile of frustration about systems that were not created for me.

As a DACAmended Mexicana, my different identities get questioned. However, I refuse to downplay being a DACAmended, Mexican woman in spaces that were not created for me. I make it clear that I will not compromise who I am to make others comfortable. I embrace being DACAmended. I embrace my accent. I will not let eye rolls stop me when I call out microaggressions. I ask that space is created for people like me, for other BIPOC, so that our voices can be centered, especially when decisions need to be made that will impact our communities directly. I do this for myself, for my familia, for my community. And I do this for the incoming classes, so that they can have it a little easier and do not have to question their Latinidad in spaces that aim to strip them of it.

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1. Erika Rodriguez was born and raised in Guadalajara, Mexico. At age 14, she came to the United States without inspection and lived as an undocumented immigrant until 2013, when she received DACA. Erika is a third year PsyD student at JFK School of Psychology at National University, with an emphasis on neuropsychology. Erika is currently doing her practicum at UCSF Zuckerberg, Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Center (MDAC), where she is receiving training on neurodevelopmental evaluations for children ages 0-17. Erika has a passion for working with immigrants and other underserved communities of color. Erika’s dissertation seeks to examine the quality of life of DACAmended individuals pre and post 2020 presidential elections, as well as the use of Advanced Parole, a travel document that allows DACAmended individuals to leave the country under very specific circumstances.



# Recruiting Students & Professionals

The NLPA Mentoring Program is recruiting student and professional members to be part of this important group in our association. As a student you can get advice from a professional member to help you navigate your educational and professional goals. As a professional you can guide a student member and help our community.

**Email us at: [mentoring@nlpa.ws](mailto:mentoring@nlpa.ws)**

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## CULTURAL HUMILITY: THE BENEFITS OF BEING OPEN AND CURIOUS

LIORA SCHNEIDER-MIRMANAS PSYD  
CALBETH ALARIBE, MPH  
OGECHI NWORDU, PSYD

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Given the increasing diversity of the United States patient population, healthcare providers must begin to diversify their minds. According to Prasad, Nair, Gadhvi, Barai, Danish, & Philip (2016), this level of diversity has shown that presenting concerns and symptoms is increasingly influenced by the patient's cultural background. Although guidelines in healthcare fields state that providers should not be prejudiced, many providers lack the fundamental skills necessary to provide culturally informed care effectively. The purpose of this article is to help healthcare providers understand the concept of cultural humility, understand ways to increase their cultural humility; most importantly, learn how to approach and treat each patient from a culturally humble stance.

We are three professional women in the healthcare space, who provide culturally responsive treatment to patients who have felt misunderstood by their psychological and primary care providers. As women from the Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) community, we also have experienced a lack of cultural understanding and awareness from health providers. Oftentimes, health providers were not open or curious towards understanding how our cultural background as well as, allowing our patients to get to know us as well. *But, what is cultural humility?*

According to Miller (2009), our culture has moved from cultural sensitivity to cultural competence to cultural humility. Miller notes that cultural humility is a continual process of self-reflection and self-critique that overtly addresses power inequities between providers and patients. He further clarifies that cultural humility is a process without an end goal and is not aimed at mastering a culture but instead is the process of being in an ongoing

and continuous relationship with the patient and self. It is essential to understand that cultural humility is the ability to be open and curious with the patient. It is a way of engaging not only professionally with the patient, but also personally. That does not mean that the provider will disclose deep and intimate information, nor will the provider become best friends with the patient. It means, however, that the provider will become aware of intersectionality and take that into account when providing care to the patient. According to Moon and Sandage (2019), the framework of cultural humility is essential for racial and ethnic communities in conceptualizing and connecting with the patient. Cultural humility is not “other-oriented”. It requires engagement from the provider to delve into their identities and understand the intersection with the patient’s identities during each meeting. Moon and Sandage (2019) emphasized the importance of expanding the therapeutic approach beyond intrapsychic and intrapersonal aspects of the person. In order to address the cultural aspect of our patients, it is essential to incorporate a broader perspective that will include the social and cultural aspects of the patient and the provider.

A culturally humble mind seeks to be fully genuine in the provider-patient process and aware of the impact that one's presence has on the patient. It is a way of being, not a way of doing. Cultural humility is challenging providers to put themselves out of their comfort zone and out of their pedestal as providers. It allows the provider to view the patient as a unique person with personal and cultural characteristics that impact the treatment and outcome.

Examples of practicing cultural humility in the clinical setting (i.e., primary care/hospital setting) include acknowledging the patient first and their disease later (McGee-Avila, 2018). Healthcare providers need to understand their patients in a more personable manner. Understanding a patient's perspectives, values, interests, and even day-to-day activities would ultimately allow for more interpersonal interactions between them to develop stronger patient-provider interactions. Healthcare providers must be willing to expand and delve into this population's specific concerns beyond the symptoms. Using a “one-

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size-fits-all” perspective will not benefit BIPOC patients and may be harmful to their health. Rather, the integration of cultural competence with cultural humility (Stubbe, 2020) will help minimize patient's fears because rapport would be established in a more gentle, sensitive, and less microaggressive manner.

Beyond the examples discussed in this article, Stubbe (2020) outlines other powerful concrete ways to establish a mutual and collaborative relationship with patients which are summarized as follows:

1. Reflect on and jot down your implicit biases towards your patient
2. Inquire directly from patients about their background including but not limited religion, traditions, medicinal practices, rather than assuming or stereotyping
3. Ask about experiences of discrimination, harassment, and bullying
4. Seek patient input about the treatment process, particularly asking about their goals and checking in with them about how the treatment process is going
5. Check for understanding of the information that is shared
6. Collaborate with the patient to design culturally sensitive treatment and seek their input on how to implement the treatment plan, particularly around whom they would like to involve if any

We call for healthcare providers to engage in the transformation process of cultural humility to enhance healthcare quality. We hope that his call to action will lead providers to integrate cultural humility into their everyday practice. Regardless of their clinical setting, all providers should seek culturally immersive ways to practice cultural humility. This approach will improve patient outcomes and increase overall trust in the healthcare system.

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**Calbeth Chika Alaribe** is an accomplished and innovative global health program leader who is committed to improving access to quality and affordable healthcare globally. She is a current Physician Assistant (PA) Student at Morehouse School of Medicine. She is also the CEO of Coyfish, a healthcare startup that aims to change the dynamic of healthcare by boldly dismantling traditional models, while putting choice and power back into the hands of patients.

**Dr. Ogechi Violet Nwordu** is an accomplished psychologist and educator. She is a catalyst for ensuring health equality and social justice for marginalized communities. Dr. Nwordu serves as a Staff Psychologist at the University of Delaware and also leads the university's anti-racism grant-funded research. Additionally, she is the Co-founder and Chief Innovation Officer for Coyfish, a company that is dismantling the traditional healthcare model and putting power back into patients' hands.

**Dr. Liora Schneider-Mirmanas** is an accomplished psychologist. Born and raised in Mexico she has more than 20 years of experience in Mexico and in the United States. As a bilingual and bicultural psychologist, she has been engaged with the Latinx community in the United States, providing therapy and education throughout the years. Dr. Schneider-Mirmanas is currently creating and developing programs for the Mexican Consulate in Philadelphia and NY to support the Latinx community, providing information and with mental health resources. Dr. Schneider-Mirmanas has been invited several times as the mental health consultant in Qualitas of Life, a non-profit organization that provides financial advice to the Latinx community.

News from The NLPA Mentoring Program (August 2021, SUMMER)



This year the NLPA Mentoring Committee was able to assign mentors to 17 student members. However, we were short of two mentors for students requiring mentors having a specialty in school psychology. We tried very hard to recruit mentors with this specialty by sending personal emails to people we know at the association unfortunately, we were not successful.

If you are a school psychologist or have another specialty and want to volunteer as a mentor, please contact us at [mentoring@nlpa.ws](mailto:mentoring@nlpa.ws).

We are offering a panel discussion on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 7:30 to 8:30 pm. The panel discussants are a recent graduate of a doctoral program and former Student Representative Taymy Josefa Caso, Ph.D., and two current doctoral students, Charmaine Mora Ozuna and Jacqueline Fuentes both at The University of Georgia will be talking about How to deal with Stressors while Completing a degree. At the time of this writing, this event had not taken place yet.

The NLPA Mentoring Program is planning a meeting for the current mentors and mentees at our conference next October. Please stay alert to any of our messages to our current mentees and mentors. We would like everyone to meet each other.

We are also planning information meetings at our October Conference 2021 for students and professional members interested to join the NLPA Mentoring Program. Looking forward to meeting you all.



## BLACK INTELLECTUAL LEGACY AND TESTIMONY OF SURVIVAL IN THE FACE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN BRAZIL

MATHEUS ASMASSALLAN DE SOUZA FERREIRA<sup>1,2,3</sup>

PhD Candidate – Developmental Psychology  
Federal University of Bahia (UFBA)

### Testimonio / Testemunho

*"Exu killed a bird yesterday with a stone that he only  
threw today."  
(Yoruba wisdom)*

#### EXU IS THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND BEGINNING AGAIN

I begin my writing with this Yoruba wisdom above, which announces a path of resistance and promotion of power: Exu. Exu is the orisha guardian of crossroads, lord of paths and possibilities, guide of communication and diasporic transits. Exu was understood throughout colonial single history as equivalent to the “devil” and here he is re-signified from the Afro-religious understandings of African origin in Brazil, as the one who gives permission and opens the way. Exu is the beginning, the middle and the beginning again, and represents the circularity of knowledge against the colonization processes (Rufino, 2019). To resort to the sign of Exu is to bet on a possibility of breaking with Eurocentric and colonial epistemologies, thus, Exu becomes a sign of a counter-colonial presupposition (Bispo dos Santos, 2015), as he does not necessarily seek unity, but rather respect for the diversity. Therefore, I will return in these writings to my ancestors, who lived in other times of repression and violence, but left a legacy of lessons for the current hostile times of black existence in Brazil.

#### THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AS YET ANOTHER BLACK DEATH POLICY

At this time, Brazil is breaking a record in the number of deaths from Covid-19 and is considered the epicenter of the pandemic. Today<sup>4</sup>, we reach 4,249 deaths registered in 24 hours. With this data, our country has a total of 345,025

deaths and 13,279. 857 cases of Covid-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, according to data consolidated

by the National Council of Health Secretaries of Brazil. In the same period, we are witnessing the debate on bill 948/2021 reaching the Brazilian Senate, which facilitates the purchase and application of vaccines against coronavirus by private companies, in other words, the legitimation of the privileges of the Brazilian white elite also covers the immunization of Covid-19. In our country<sup>5</sup>, about 3.2 million people who declared themselves as white received the first dose of a vaccine against Covid-19, while among black people, that number was just over 1.7 million. In addition, we, black people, die 40% more than white people and we represent 57% of those killed by the coronavirus disease in Brazil.

In the face of yet another cruel absurdity of the current Brazilian’s management, by President Jair Bolsonaro, it is necessary to remember that the first fatal victim of Covid-19 in Brazil was Cleonice Gonçalves, a 63-years-old black woman, domestic worker who was contaminated by her employer at Rio de Janeiro (RJ), who’ve just returned from a trip to Italy and did not release her from work, even after feeling the symptoms of Covid-19. Also in the same city, deaths in police operations increased by 161% during the pandemic, and of these deaths, 86% of the victims were black.

One of the illustrative cases of these necropolitics (Mbembe, 2018) was the murder of the boy João Pedro Matos, just 14-years-old, who was hit by a rifle shot inside his own house, during a police operation, in which more than 72 bullets were stuck in the wall that he was shot. The naturalization of black genocide in Brazil was denounced more than 40 years ago by black intellectual Abdias do Nascimento (1977), during his exile in Nigeria. In this period, Brazil was experiencing the Civil-Military Dictatorship (1964-1985) with censorship, persecutions, prisons, torture, murders, forced disappearances and black exiles promoted by the military forces, where they stated

1. Federal University of Bahia (UFBA)
2. The Brasiliense Institute of Public Law (IDP)
3. Observatory of Student Life - OVE/UFBA
4. Thursday, April 8, 2021, when this testimony was reviewed.
5. Information from March 15, 2021, by Pública, Investigative Journalism Agency.

that racism still served as an excuse for the creation of groups that sought to harm the country's "social order". Without coincidence, currently in Brazil a request for the return of the Military Dictatorship by supporters of Jair Bolsonaro, who neglects the pandemic at various levels. In the articulation of forgetfulness and distortion of the history of privileges of whiteness, there is a white-colonial narrative that denies the black existences that allow me to carry out such writings. I am all at once proud and sad to be an exception to the rule that excludes black people from intellectual spaces. Here, I remember my ancestors, which echo in my ear: "Taking care of the leaves without realizing the roots of the tree is insignificant".

### **BLACK INTELLECTUAL LEGACY OF OUR ANCESTRY TO THE PRESENT DAY**

In this way, I thank the black intellectual Beatriz Nascimento (1989) for anticipating me and announcing, even during the period of repression of the military dictatorship, that our bodies are maps of memories that announce the rights that we lack, but are also transit territories, ancestral knowledge and technologies and that I would not have come here without the efforts of older black women, who prioritized my education and my existence to project other generations together, going beyond what whiteness imposes on us. I also salute the legacies and lessons of the black intellectual Lélia Gonzalez (1983), who also resisted the Brazilian military regime and highlighted that for reasons of geographic, historical-cultural and, above all, of the order of the unconscious, Brazil is an African America whose latinidad given as non-existent by the white elite from the enjoyment of its whiteness privileges denies the Amefricanidade (America with AfroLatinidad) of the descendants of the Africans exiled in Brazil and of those who arrived in America, before the "discovery" of the colonized history. Lélia Gonzalez (1988) states that the amefricana presence in Brazil, despite the racist denial that skillfully displaces and manifests itself at different levels - political, ideological, socioeconomic, cultural and psychological. It also clarifies that this denial process is naturalized and covered by the ideological veil of money laundering, which is repressed by Eurocentric hegemonies that minimize the importance of the black contributions of our country.

I return to these black intellectuals in the face of the silencing and erasure of contributions in Brazilian intellectuals as well as from the sociologist and psychoanalyst Virgínia Leone Bicudo, who wrote one of the first dissertations on race relations in Brazil, participated in the foundation and institutionalization of Brazilian

psychoanalysis and was one of the first black teachers in the country's universities, which went beyond the closed doors of doctor's offices, taking psychoanalysis to the radio and newspapers, all of this in the beginning of the 20th century, being a black woman and of humble origin. In addition to Virginia Bicudo, there is Neusa Santos Souza, a black psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, who wrote the book "Becoming black": The vicissitudes of the Identity of the Brazilian Negro in Social Ascension (1983) in which she analyzed personal trajectories, assumptions and developments the difficult process of social ascension of blacks in Brazil, where only the meanings of white ascension were valued. As a living black intellectual of the current times, I turn to Maria Aparecida Bento who is the Executive Director of Center for the Study of Labor Relations and Inequalities (CEERT) since 1990. With Master's degree in Social Psychology in 1992, she wrote the dissertation "Rescuing my great-grandmother - discrimination" and resistance in the voices of black workers, in her PhD in Developmental Psychology from the University of São Paulo (USP), she wrote the thesis "Narcissistic pacts in racism: whiteness and power in business organizations and public power" defended in 2002, where she investigated the whiteness privileges in the recruitment selections for work. The legacy of intellectuality and resistance of my ancestors announces ways of survival for me and denounces that the black claims are old for the basic right to live, to be humanized and understood by a psychology, which is still white, elitized and disconnected with our amefricano belonging. This psychology legitimized by whiteness still uses Eurocentric signs and assumptions, which place us as exotic and subject to subordination.

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## #NLPA2021 PA'LANTE

RENATO M. TALHADAS, AMFT, APCC, MADC

SF Aguilas: El Ambiente

*In these unprecedented times, what does it mean to be LatinX? It feels as if we are often reflecting on the progress made as well as the political threats affecting our community every day. We continue to face new challenges as our voice is being tested and pushed to be silenced in the voting booth through a political climate that is racist and prejudice in many forms. Please be mindful that this is no quiet revolution!*

*Through our ancestors and our immigrant generation, we will always live bicultural in this world to what our race and ethnicity represent of us. We must continue to move forward and step into our freedom, our rights, our purpose as every citizen ought too. To do this, we must continue to listen and advocate for one another. We must move forward for a better and safe tomorrow.*

*Our conference is here not to create division or competition, but foster unity in assembly. We do not parade our history and our privilege, but march in respect and in honor of our hard labor for a better future. We lived in a time where mental health was once taboo, and now the value of psychology, psychiatry, therapy, coaching, and counseling is a needed science like never before.*

*Thank you for your hard work, you are an inspiration! I am sure your loved ones are proud and those after us will be forever grateful. I would like to share my deepest condolences for any loss that you may have or are experiencing. May it be a family member or friend due to COVID-19 or another cause. Maybe it is a heartbreak or disappointment you may be feeling for some time now. We are all going through something tremendously difficult, and it's ok not to be ok. You are tremendously important and I look forward to knowing you more. Pa'lante!*

*Lastly, thank you to our director Dr. Eduardo Morales for your tremendous work for our community. You are a kind, generous, and loving mentor and friend I am so honored to have in my life.*

*- Renato M. Talhadas, AMFT, APCC, MADC*

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**Renato M. Talhadas.** (el/him/his) has been an active Bay Area volunteer and professional for many years particularly in civic service and social justice causes. Originally from Brazil and raised on the East Coast, Renato moved to the Bay Area for Teach for America and worked for numerous schools from K-12. Later, after noticing the prevalence of mental health issues in tech, Renato left his employment as a social media specialist to pursue his Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy and Clinical Counseling. With a specialization in addictions, Renato has worked with the city and county of San Francisco to create programs to support the growing opioid crisis. Currently, he works as a program director and therapist for AGUILAS: EL AMBIENTE supporting the culturally sensitive environment of gay/bisexual Latinos, especially those struggling with addiction, homelessness, asylum, and HIV/AIDS. Renato is passionate about the Portuguese speaking residents who are often discriminated against, marginalized, and left unnoticed. Renato hopes to begin his PsyD in Clinical Psychology soon and publish his first book next year





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## “ILLUSIONS”: A AFROLATINX WOMAN AND HER WOUNDS

BY: DR. MIRELLA DÍAZ-SANTOS <sup>1</sup>

### SPOKEN WORD

When you see me, what do you see?

Do you see my skin color?

Do you see my big hair?

Do you notice my accent?

Do you notice my body?

What goes in your mind when you see me?

Do you try to decide whether I am a true doctor?

Whether I am smart?

Whether I am worthy to be your provider?

Which questions would you ask?

Would you ask where I am from?

Which graduate school I attended?

Who do I know?

How long have I been doing this work?

And when I answer all your questions, what goes in your mind?

Do you wonder why you're been seeing by one of those people that do not know how to speak English properly?

Do you wonder if I got here because of affirmative action or somebody's white guilt?

Do you wonder who did I sleep with?

Do you wonder how many favors I made?

Do you wonder whether I got this position because of “my pretty face” and “exotic body” as others have mentioned?

And when I’m conducting the neuropsychological evaluation, would you challenge me at every step of the way?

Would you stop the standardized procedures I have to follow to ensure validity of the test results because you want to “teach me” how to correctly pronounce a word and how to articulate my sentences?

Would you ask me why is this necessary?

Would you ever call me doctor, or would you just call me by my first name even when I had provided all my credentials?

And now... do you wonder why I am exhausted at every clinical encounter?

Do you wonder why I need a community to heal these daily wounds?

These daily wounds to my identity?

Do you wonder why it takes me so much to “snap out of it” and continue to embark my duty as your doctor?

Do you wonder why it takes me so much time to write the clinical report, so it captures your essence rather than my reaction to your reaction towards me and the wounds you unintentionally caused me?

And now... I’m here in silence and wondering, why is it so hard for you to see me?

Just me.

If I can see you for you, can you see me for me?

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<sup>1</sup>**Dr. Mirella Díaz-Santos** is a first-generation Afro-Latinx cis-woman from Carolina-Loíza, Puerto Rico. She completed her bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, before moving to the States and receiving her doctorate degree in clinical psychology-neuropsychology from Boston University. Dr. Díaz-Santos is currently an Assistant Professor in-residence in the Department of Neurology with a second appointment with the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the DGSOM, UCLA. She is a neuropsychologist and researcher with an expertise in Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias working primarily with the Latino/a older adult English-Spanish bilingual community and their families.