

INTRODUCTION: WOMANIST AND MUJERISTA PSYCHOLOGIES

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You may trod me in the very dirt, but still, like dust, I'll rise.

—Maya Angelou (African American poet)

They tried to bury us. They didn't know we were seeds.

—Mexican Proverb

The psychology of African American women and Latinas is rich and complex, encompassing self-expression, creativity, nuanced gender roles, spirituality, community and family orientation, resistance, and resilience. We are women who bring healing, wholeness, and restoration to ourselves and our communities. The growing literature on our experiences, affect, cognitions, and agency includes narratives of survival, struggle, and soaring. Although we live with great risk economically, psychologically, socially, and politically, we also employ noteworthy ways of coping, growing, and thriving. As opposed to much general psychology literature that pathologizes or marginalizes our experiences, this work centralizes our psyches and unpacks the underexplored areas of our historical and contemporary ways of knowing and approaches to living. The value of the cultural and gender identity of African American women and Latinas must not be narrowly viewed from a deficit perspective but instead as an asset and contributor to meaning, identity, and strengths.

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Womanist and Mujerista Psychologies: Voices of Fire, Acts of Courage, T. Bryant-Davis and L. Comas-Díaz (Editors)

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Psychologists, personally and through their professionally directed efforts of advocacy, counseling, teaching, research, and consultation, are in a unique position to promote equity and social justice (Comas-Díaz, 2000). The American Psychological Association (APA) has promoted a number of key priorities that have assisted in laying the groundwork for this work. APA's *Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice and Organization* (American Psychological Association, 2002) state that race and ethnicity must be understood in concert with other identity markers, such as gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, migration status, disability, and spirituality/religious identity. In the APA (2010) *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*, the organization noted,

Where scientific or professional knowledge in the discipline of psychology establishes that an understanding of factors associated with age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language or socioeconomic status is essential for effective implementation of their services or research, psychologists have or obtain the training, experience, consultation or supervision necessary to ensure the competence of their services, or they make appropriate referrals. (p. 4)

This underscores the need for education regarding the psychology of African American women and Latinas. It is unethical to ignore these factors, and doing so can be clinically damaging. The Ethics Code states clearly that psychologists are to take steps to avoid doing harm to their clients. Specifically,

Psychologists do not knowingly engage in behavior that is harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact in their work based on factors such as those persons' age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language or socioeconomic status. (p. 5)

APA (2001) also adopted a resolution to counter the prevalence and consequences of racism, oppression, discrimination, religious intolerance, and xenophobia, including the specific manifestations of these violations on women. These guidelines and resolutions clearly articulate the mandate for the field of psychology to be open to the multiple, layered, complex, intersecting identities of all peoples.

AIM AND AUDIENCE

The aim of this book is to provide an overview of two emerging and intersecting psychological frameworks: womanist psychology and *mujerista* psychology. As with the sociological study of womanism and *mujerismo*, it is important

to note that although in name these theories may be early in development, in praxis they are long-standing, often overlooked realities of numerous racially and ethnically marginalized women. This text explores the interdisciplinary foundations of these psychologies, the state of the current literature on each, and the needs for future development. We, the editors of this volume, hope that this work provokes new thought in these areas that will result in innovative, nuanced, and life-enhancing theories and interventions. The intended audience is primarily psychologists and psychology students of diverse backgrounds who are committed to developing an inclusive, ethical, and culturally congruent approach to their understanding and application of psychology. The second and equally important audience is ethnically diverse women, African American and Latina women nonpsychologists in particular, who are interested in this work for either personal edification or scholarship in fields outside of psychology.

This book is the first psychology text to centralize the psychology of African American women and Latinas from theory to practice. We chose to examine womanist and *mujerista* psychologies together for three primary reasons: (a) They have similar priorities and overlapping focus areas; (b) they face common comparable intersections of oppression while having a history of adopting cultural strengths to navigate and resist those oppressive forces; and (c) the joint scholarly effort undertaken to produce this book mirrors the value of collaboration and sisterhood that are critical aspects of both psychologies. In approaching this work, we adopted the perspective of womanism and *mujerismo*, which are defined more fully below. Womanism and *mujerismo* branched out of theology and cultural studies to reach psychology's bastion. This volume articulates the womanist and *mujerista* psychologies by first grounding the reader in an understanding of womanist and *mujerista* sociological thought, then expanding that thought to psychological science and practice.

It is important to note that the identity of the editors and authors are African-descendant womanists and Latina *mujeristas*. Although all scholars can contribute to the study of African American women and Latinas, scholars writing from both the basis of the literature as well as their lived experience are valuable. Recognizing the value of lived experience counters the false notion of objectivity and instead embraces the reality that the scholar both influences and is influenced by his or her scholarship.

DEFINITION OF WOMANISM

The term *womanist* was coined by Walker (1983): "a Black feminist or feminist of color committed to the survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically for health" (p. xi). In other words, in addition to centralizing survival and wholeness of women and

men, a womanist does not create a hierarchy between the fights against racism and sexism but sees both of these fights as necessary and central. Womanism is a sociopolitical framework that centralizes race, gender, class, and sexuality as central markers of women's lived experiences (Brown-Douglas, 1993). It moves beyond the compartmentalizing of Black women's experience as is often seen in feminism and multiculturalism and moves toward an integrated perspective and analysis. The womanist perspective maintains that addressing racism, ethnocentrism, and poverty is equally important as addressing gender issues, such as sexism (Henley, Meng, O'Brien, McCarthy, & Sockloskie, 1998). Similar to Black theology, central aspects of womanism are liberation, self-determination, and the humanity of all people with special attention to those who have been dehumanized. Similar to feminism, womanism honors women's multiple ways of knowing, including the valuing of spirit and the unspoken. Womanism is holistic in its recognition and celebration of the various aspects of black female identity.

According to Walker (1983), womanist identity has multiple aspects; one aspect is that the affect and behavior of a womanist demonstrate empowerment, love, spirituality, and strength. *Womanist agency* was described by Walker as courageous, audacious, and willful. Womanists love themselves and other women, sexually or nonsexually, and this love transcends boundaries to reach all of humanity, desiring that all people would survive and thrive. Walker further noted that womanists celebrate life fully, through the arts, such as music and dance, as well as through the spirit. Despite the realities of oppression, a womanist recognizes her divine identity as a living reflection of powerful good on the earth. Womanists are also collectivistic and community oriented in that the focus of womanism moves beyond individual well-being to encompass the well-being of entire peoples and communities and then to humanity overall. To counter the notion that womanism is merely a subset of feminism, Walker described a womanist as purple in contrast to the lavender of feminism. In other words, womanism represents strength that is not a dilution or lesser construct than feminism or Black identity. Harrell, Coleman, and Adams (2014) noted that womanism is "a way of understanding the struggle for wholeness among women of African descent who refuse to collude with the invisibility of their womanhood or Blackness demanded by gender and racial oppression" (p. 75). Womanism is grounded in notions of possibility, hope, and change that enhance optimal living that transcends from survival to thriving (Westfield, 2007). Walker gave a psychological rationale for the use of the word *womanism* in her 1984 *New York Times* interview (Bradley, 1984) when she stated that a new word must be created when the old word (*feminism*) fails to capture the behavior and change that one is seeking to identify.

It is important to take note of the criticism that has arisen regarding the term *womanism*. Although Walker (1983) explicitly included same-gender-loving

women in her original definition of the term, Coleman (2013) described the tendency of many womanist theologians to exclude lesbian and bisexual women of faith from their scholarship and ministry. Their application of the term to only apply to the experiences of heterosexual Christian women has led to some lesbians of color rejection of the label *womanist*. Given its original inclusive intent as well as the presence of womanist theologians who are also inclusive in their use of the word, we find it valuable to claim the construct for this discourse of holistic psychology, which attends to life at the intersection of multiple identities, including but not limited to race, gender, socioeconomic status, and sexuality. Additionally, we note that some have championed the terms *Africana womanist* or *African womanist* to refer to a more Black nationalist political view, which is also less inclusive than the original construct proposed by Walker. Given its original meaning and the phrasing “Africana womanist,” which can distinguish the two constructs, we choose to embrace the term *womanist* as attending to and centralizing issues of race and culture while still holding on to the aims of creating communities that build bridges cross racial lines.

An additional debate has centered on who can adopt the label *womanist*, with some arguing that the term describes African-descent women, others broadening the term to include all ethnically marginalized women, and still others including all people who endorse the sociopolitical priorities of womanism. Concern has been raised about persons with White privilege coming into womanist scholarship and erasing Black women’s power and voice through appropriation. Another concern is that those who personally and/or politically are not committed to combating anti-Blackness and anti-womanhood will enter womanist circles and dilute the focus resulting in the repeated marginalization of African-descendant women. For the purposes of womanist and *mujerista* psychologies, we contend that ethnically marginalized women and men can contribute to womanist and *mujerista* psychologies through teaching, counseling, and research. Other persons who would like to practice, teach, or research womanist and *mujerista* psychologies should do so with particular self-reflection, awareness, and ownership of their privilege, respect for self-definition, and a focused active commitment to combating racialized gender oppression, as well as all intersecting forms of oppression. Additionally, we recommend that persons who identify as feminists or liberation psychologists engage actively in immersing those fields in combating oppression that particularly targets African American and Latina women.

DEFINITION OF MUJERISMO

As a construct, *mujerismo* (from the Spanish word *mujer*, meaning woman) emerged when Latina feminist theologians baptized themselves as *mujeristas* (Isasi-Díaz, 1994). *Mujerismo* is a Latina womanism (Comas-Díaz,

2008; Mejia et al., 2013; Ojeda, 2014). Indeed, the conceptual and political translation of womanist into Spanish is *mujerista* (see http://centrodeartigo.com/articulos-informativos/article_79325.html).

Like womanists, *mujeristas* embrace an interdisciplinary perspective. They endorse inclusion as an essential ingredient for the movement's continual development. In this way, diverse voices are not only welcomed but also sought after.

The term *mujerismo* was initially used during the 1970s when Peruvian women used it to dissociate themselves from feminist movements (Vuola, 2002). Due to this historical antecedent, the translation of *womanism* into *mujerista* has had negative connotations in the Latin American context. For instance, Lily (2013) argued that the term *mujerismo* has been historically associated with female gender without considering class, race, location, and their interaction. Moreover, some Latin American women theologians have criticized *mujerismo*, accusing it of lacking a sociopolitical component (Aquino, 2002). To illustrate, Lamas (as quoted in Aquino, 2002) accused *mujeristas* of glorifying differences, assuming a homogenous identity, subscribing to a unitarian ideology, and producing oppositions that weaken the political impact of feminism. However, these accusations appear to be decontextualized. Such concerns emanate from a Latin American location where feminists may be oppressed because of their gender but not necessarily because of their gendered-coded ethnicity and race. In other words, compared with Latinas in the United States, numerous Latin American feminists are not an ethnic minority in a Latin American context. This perspective ignores the diversity and the multiple oppressions among Latinas in the United States, who as women of color, are exposed to intersecting oppressions including gender, race/ethnicity, class, location, xenophobia, and language. Chapter 6 of this volume, "Mujerista Psychospirituality," provides an extended discussion of *mujerismo*.

WOMANIST AND MUJERISTA PSYCHOLOGIES

Womanist and *mujerista* psychologies centralize the need to focus on the self-definition and art of healing of Black women and Latinas as they strive to survive, grow, and thrive in the face of multiple, intersecting forms of oppression. Recognizing that the word *psyche* has its roots in the Greek word for soul or spirit, we find it noteworthy that a foundational aspect of African and Latina-descendant women's psychology has been a study of their spirituality and theology. Womanist and *mujerista* psychologies are holistic in nature, understanding the necessity of interdisciplinary scholarship that honors the role of psychology, as well as theology, cultural studies, gender studies, sociology, and cultural anthropology. Womanist and *mujerista* psychologies

focus on emotional healing from a psychospiritual perspective that connects with transpersonal thought; an understanding and respect for their framework is critical for the provision of culturally congruent treatment and ethical multicultural research (Holiday, 2010). In keeping with this recognition, although this volume is based in a psychological worldview, it integrates the literature and conceptualizations of multiple disciplines.

Womanist and mujerista psychologies maintain that three of the tasks central for wholeness and well-being are self-definition, self-empowerment, and critical awareness (Sears-Louder, 2008). These tasks become building blocks for a holistic life that encompasses connection and spirituality (Bryant-Davis, 2013). According to Sears-Louder (2008), the aim of health from the perspective of womanist and mujerista psychologies is liberation, which has such indicators as destiny, joy, freedom, and well-being. The spiritual quest and liberation aims of womanist and mujerista psychologies lead not only to whole, empowered individuals but also to transformed societies in which all people have access to well-being, freedom, and liberation (Sears-Louder, 2008).

Although feminism held broad appeal for women from different racial and ethnic communities, it took different forms according to the ideological, sociopolitical, and cultural contexts of the movements from which they emerged (Baumgardner & Richards, 2000). Womanism and mujerismo emerged in the midst of White-dominant feminism's initial failure to address women of color's multiple intersecting oppressions and realities and multiculturalism's initial neglect of ethnically marginalized women's racial and gender concerns. Womanist and mujerista psychologies call for the centralizing of intersectional identities and the wholeness of African- and Latina-descendant women globally, as well as all of humanity. Consequently, priorities that separated womanists and mujeristas from White feminists include racism, culture, immigration, class, unemployment, poverty, colonization, and domestic violence (Ojeda, 2014). Being aware of their compounded oppressions, women of color enact resistance from multiple forms of opposition. According to Sandoval (1998), this awareness fosters women of color's development of a differential consciousness (for a fuller discussion on this issue, see Chapter 6, this volume). Moreover, other significant differences between womanist/mujeristas and dominant feminists included womanist/mujeristas' attention to decolonization, antiracism, xenophobia, and collective liberation. In particular, mujeristas differ from dominant feminism as in their focus on location, biculturalism/transculturation, *transfrontera*/borderlands, and transnational issues. Even more, womanists and mujeristas subscribe to a global vision.

Womanism and mujerismo represent alternative kinds of feminism. They constitute oppositional expressions to dominant feminism. Within this perspective, womanism and mujerismo expand feminist psychology by focusing on

the centrality of community, mutual caring, and global solidarity; while aiming towards collective liberation and transformation.

These feminisms of color are part of U.S. third-world feminism. According to Sandoval (1991), U.S. third-world feminism represents a new form of historical consciousness whose structure remains outside the dominant feminism. As members of the U.S. third-world feminism, womanists and *mujeristas* engage in social justice actions and ally themselves in solidarity with other oppressed groups across the world.

A central defining factor among womanists and *mujeristas* is their commitment to spirit (Isasi-Diaz, 1994; Walker, 1983). Indeed, spirituality permeates the lives of both womanists and *mujeristas*. Such an everyday spiritual orientation relates to womanist/*mujerista*'s aspiration of pursuing knowledge, meaning, transcendence, hope, connectedness, and compassion (C. B. Williams & Wiggins, 2010). Spirit and spirituality are womanists' coping mechanisms against oppression, and vehicles of transformation. Within this context, the term *womanism* has both religious and secular uses. However, neither womanism nor *mujerismo* are religious in the sense of adhering to an organization, doctrine, or set of rituals (C. B. Williams & Wiggins, 2010). Rather, both womanism and *mujerismo* involve theoretical, methodological, healing, and developmental processes. They both recognize the nuanced and intersecting realities of spirituality and religiosity and their bidirectional relationship with well-being (Bryant-Davis & Wong, 2013).

Drawing on the current literature, we propose that womanist and *mujerista* psychologies focus on self-definition, agency, community or social support, survival strategies, coping strategies, resistance strategies, growth, healing, resilience, and thriving. These defining aspects take place in the context of a relational priority that seeks to create, nurture, and maintain a range of healthy relationships, including connections between women or sisterhood (Bryant-Davis, 2013). From a cognitive perspective, these psychologies unpack the ways women come to know themselves despite an often toxic society that devalues them with racism and sexism, as well as other forms of oppression, such as classism, heterosexism, religious intolerance, ageism, and able-bodyism. From a behavioral perspective, womanist and *mujerista* psychologies explore the agency and motivating factors that influence the actions of womanist and *mujerista* women and girls. In keeping with a learning and development perspective, racial and gender socialization is examined in ways that lend insight into the social messages that African American and Latina girls and women are given and the impact of these messages. Considering the trauma lens, womanist and *mujerista* psychologies explore the factors that create risk for Black women and Latinas, as well as the protective factors that prevent trauma and those factors that aid in women's survival, healing, coping, and thriving, not only in the aftermath of trauma but also in the reality

of ongoing trauma. Finally from a strengths-based approach, womanist and mujerista psychology underscores the cultural strengths of Black women and Latinas and the ways these strengths are taught, developed, and maintained. Next, we present womanist and mujerista psychologies' theory, method, practice, and social action.

Theory

Womanism and *mujerismo* are anchored in a metatheory, with an interdisciplinary approach (Coleman, 2013; Harvey, Johnson, & Heath, 2013; Maparyan, 2011; Phillips, 2011; Thomas, 1998, 2009; C. B. Williams & Wiggins, 2010; D. D. Williams, 2012). As such, this metatheory comprises spirituality/religion, cultural studies, history, education, indigenous and non-Western healing traditions, art, politics, psychology, anthropology, sociology, queer studies, and mythology—among others. Moreover, it challenges hierarchies, such as rational ways of knowing versus other ways of knowing.

Womanist theory, as outlined by Harrell et al. (2014), has significant connections to African psychology and positive psychology. It is not a mere subset of feminism but has independent cultural roots. Womanist theory is culturally based and strengths-based in that its focus goes beyond pathology and oppression to the development of optimal psychological and collective well-being of African-descended women and all of humanity, across race and gender lines (Harrell et al., 2014). Womanist psychological theory is a liberation-based approach that is based in the idea that difference does not equal deviance (Brown-Collins, 1988). Recently, Harrell et al. proposed a positive womanist psychospirituality framework that emphasizes thriving and optimal functioning from a culturally contextualized view of human behavior that aims to highlight and support the strengths and agency of women of African descent. Six positive womanist life principles are proposed on the basis of womanist theory: (a) extended ways of knowing, (b) spirited and inspired living, (c) interconnected love, (d) balance and flexibility, (e) liberation and inclusion, and (f) empowered authenticity (Harrell et al., 2014).

Both womanism and *mujerismo* provide integrated analyses of gender, race, class, and sexual orientation to avoid essentialism (C. B. Williams & Wiggins, 2010). As such, a womanist/*mujerista* theory subverts hierarchies of race, gender, class, place, and sexuality. The source of womanist and *mujerista* metatheory is the lived experience of women of color. Indeed, women of color's experiences differ from those of White women. A womanist theory articulates how women of color can rescue and preserve their history and improve their traditions. Certainly, a womanist/*mujerista* theory entails an affirmation of women of color's voice; a critical analysis of their place in the world; and an examination of the sociopolitical construction of their

realities within the intersecting contexts of race, ethnicity, gender, culture, class, sexuality, and other diversity variables (Paz, 2006).

Using a womanist psychological lens, women of color revise dominant feminist psychological theories of identity development and view women of color's negative self-images as the result of their historical, contemporary, and internalized oppression. Therefore, they have developed gendered and racialized theories of identity development. In this manner, they address women of color's realities, including identity development, challenges, and strengths. Indeed, womanist identity development models and feminist models differ in that womanist theories are able to capture women of color's experience of identity growth (Boisnier, 2003).

Ossana, Helms, and Leonard (1992) proposed a model of womanist identity development and a scale to measure it. The stages Helms adopts are pre-encounter, encounter, immersion–emersion, and internalization. These stages represent the stages of lack of awareness of the realities of gender oppression and the impact it has on one's self-definition as a woman, the conscious encountering of oppressive forces, the immersion into exploring one's gender and the quest for sisterhood, to an internalized, grounded, secure sense of a self that is aware of oppression but not defined by it. Helms argued that to develop a healthy identity, Black women must move from an externally and societally based definition of womanhood to an internal definition within which women define their values, beliefs, and abilities for themselves (Ossana et al., 1992). Helms's model ends at the point of self-definition instead of the mandate for social action, as she sees self-definition and acceptance as primary. Hoffman (2006) found a positive correlation between gender self-definition and achieved racial identity. In other words, gender identity development does not conflict with positive racial and ethnic identity development but can be developed and nurtured together.

Many *mujeristas* endorse a transfronteriza/borderland identity development model. Anzaldúa (1987) advanced a transfronteriza/borderlands theory of identity development, one that affirms national, ethnic, racial, linguistic, psychological, and spiritual aspects of Latina identity. The transfronteriza/borderlands theory offers the new *Mestiza* (a Latina with mixed indigenous and European ancestry) as well as the new *Mulata* (a Latina with mixed African, European and indigenous ancestry) a multiplicity of aspects of identity without negating or canceling out the diverse parts of the self.

Womanist and *mujerista* psychologies are the daughters of the marriage between psychology and spirituality. However, they are dissident daughters, giving birth to a feminist psychospirituality. To illustrate, womanists and *mujeristas* acknowledge spirit as a driving force in their life. Spirituality helps women to cope with oppression, positively reframe their situation, become resilient, and act in an affirming way. Spirituality infuses women's

development with values such as compassion, tending, and care. For instance, among many African American women, care is a form of activism (Ramsey, 2012). Moreover, spirituality affirms women of color's values of connectedness, and interrelatedness. It ignites women's personal growth and ability to commit to their community's and larger society's well-being. Within this perspective, womanism is a positive psychological principle that predicates the oneness with nature principle, strengthens emotional wholeness and resilience, and affirms solidarity among oppressed individuals. To sustain these goals womanist and *mujeristas* use participatory, healing, and liberating methods. Additionally, as women empower and strengthen themselves, they share their knowledge and wisdom with others, creating what Castillo (1994) called a "collective state of being." Womanists and *mujeristas* use gender- and culturally specific methods to oppose oppression and foster personal and collective liberation.

Method

The womanist psychological methodology entails a participatory, inclusive, and liberating orientation. It aims to help women restory and reauthor their lives, engage in liberating expressions, and commit to social justice. Informed by the realities of women of color, womanist methods aim to give voice to the voiceless; foment critical consciousness; affirm women's gender, racial, and ethnocultural strengths; and engage in transformative social action. As a result, these methods help women to work towards the cocreation of a socially just society. To work toward these goals, womanists oppose inequality and oppression. They engage in social actions aimed at the democratization of power.

Woman-centered liberation scholarship requires the perpetual seeking and maintaining of survival strategies to address intersecting forms of oppression that confront the scholar and manifests in a range of cognitive dissonance challenges related to lack of mentorship, isolation, and demanding expectations (Cannon, Gise Johnson, & Sims, 2005). Our methodology is aimed at unearthing our untold stories, raising awareness of the realities of our oppression, developing our survival pathways, maintaining spiritual well-being, and nurturing relational connections across the diaspora (Cannon et al., 2005). These aims require that we develop methods of translating our mother language experiences into academic, official scholarly language (Cannon et al., 2005)

Women with a coalitional consciousness and a collective state of being endorse a global solidarity with all oppressed people. To contribute to the creation of a better society, most womanists and *mujeristas* favor what Sandoval (2000) called the *methodology of the oppressed*. In other words, women of color

engage in strategies of resistance to promote the development of a coalitional consciousness (Sandoval, 2000). Some of the methods of the oppressed include storytelling, womanist/mujerista research (qualitative and interpretative methods) and *artivism*—art for the purpose of empowerment and social change.

Storytelling

Storytelling is a way a relating among many people of color. Within a womanist and mujerista context, telling a story—either in spoken or written words—is a way to counter women of color’s traditions of silence (Lockhart, 2006–2007). Story telling can take the form of testimony—whether political (*testimonio*) and or spiritual. *Autohistoria*—woman of color self-history using diverse media such as narratives, art, spoken word, and others—is a self-inquiry method favored by many mujeristas. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* (Menchú, 2010) is an example of both *testimonio* and *autohistoria*. Yet, another narrative method, storytelling circles, enables women of color to tell their own story and learn from other women’s stories. These empowering narrative methods are a collaborative, noncompetitive tool to enhance womanist’s self-confidence, cultural consciousness, and agency.

Womanist/Mujerista Research

Womanist and mujerista research focuses on the lived experiences of women of color. Womanist research requires rediscovering previously neglected and rejected womanist repositories of knowledge, as womanist scholars perpetually seek to balance the multiple explicit and implicit priorities of womanists, including but not limited to maintaining pro-Black and pro-woman analytic frameworks (Cannon et al., 2005). As such these methods allow women to rethink the hierarchies of power with the aim at democratizing society. Womanist research methods involve qualitative, quantitative, interpretative, and mixed approaches. However, womanists prefer self-inquiry methods as opposed to only quantitative approaches to highlight subjectivity (J. Williams & Lykes, 2003). Therefore, a womanist method integrates multiple psychological approaches including psychodynamic, cognitive behavior, Jungian, humanistic, positive psychology; and others. To illustrate, participatory action research (PAR) is an inquiry method that emphasizes community participation and social action (Smith, Rosenweig, & Schmidt, 2010). This engaged inquiry is grounded in sociopolitical history to address issues of concern for community members who participate as co-researchers (McIntyre, 2008). Womanist scholarship has as an ending point the creation of womanist-works-in-action that manifest themselves as community relationships and transformative projects embedded in the communities where women “live,

work, and worship” (Cannon et al., 2005). The teaching of womanist scholarship and methodology requires a radical commitment to inclusivity and a positioning of the students as co-learners, as well as creative learning projects such as the use of student journal entries, mind mapping, multimedia engagement, and student-led discussions (Cannon et al., 2005). Freire’s (1970) work, particularly the pedagogy of the oppressed, inspired the development of PAR. An interdisciplinary research approach, PAR is a knowledge-making research method that promotes social change. Chapter 2, on *mujerista* research, in this volume provides an example of the application of a PAR method.

Photovoice

Photovoice, another womanist/*mujerista* method, combines photography with grassroots social action. Based on Freire’s (1970) critical consciousness, photovoice, also known as *participatory photography*, was originally developed to empower marginalized women in China. Participants in photovoice take photographs that represent their points of view regarding their communities. Afterward, a group of participants analyze the photos and develop narratives to understand the community and take action (Wang & Burris, 1997). Examples of these actions are outreach programs designed to improve community health, education, and empowerment. A community consultation, photovoice helps participants to author the representation of their communities.

Artivism

Many women of color create their own art to express their life experiences, oppose oppression, foster empowerment, and advance liberation. Artivism (art created to promote critical consciousness and social change) helps womanists and *mujeristas* to author their lives and represent their communities, as well as to promote transformative action. As activists, womanists/*mujeristas* use their creative expressions to struggle against oppression and injustice. Sandoval and Latorre (2008) identified spoken word, street art, indigenous murals, protesting, altar making, and others creative forms as Chicana/Latina examples of artivism. A powerful illustration of artivism is Ester Hernandez’s image *Wanted: Terrorist La Virgen de Guadalupe—Should Be Considered Powerful and Dangerous* (Román-Odio, 2013). You can see the image at <http://collections.museumca.org/?q=collection-item/2010941> and <http://www.garlandgrey.com/>

Womanist and *mujerista* psychology includes cultural traditions, such as music and dance, as a way of accessing and expressing their spirituality. Womanist and *mujerista* psychologists adopt a holistic view highlighting the intersection of mind, body, and spirit and the interconnection of people, spirit, ancestors, and nature. For these psychological lenses, the central aim of combating racism, sexism, and classism, as well as other forms of oppression,

is crucial (Hill Collins, 1998; Townes, 1995). With this in mind, the art of womanists and *mujeristas* seeks to tell the truth about oppression and to eradicate it through the vehicle of the arts, including textiles, crafts, spoken word, music, dance, theater, and filmmaking.

In this volume, the chapters “Womanism, Creativity, and Resistance: Making A Way Out of ‘No Way’” (Chapter 7) and “*Mujerista* Creativity: Latin@ Sacred Arts as Life-Course Developmental Resources” (Chapter 8) offer examples of activism.

Practice

Unlike many Western models of counseling, womanist and *mujerista* practice centralizes race, gender, and spirituality, honoring the active role of spirituality in the lives of everyday Black and Latina women (Comas-Díaz & Greene, 2013). Womanist and *mujerista* practice centralizes the therapeutic survival, healing, and resistance strategies of self-determination, social support, and activism (Hill Collins, 1990). Womanist and *mujerista* psychologies in practice honor ethnically marginalized women’s culture, strength, and emotional flexibility to empower women and men to survive and thrive (Nabors & Pettee, 2003). Womanist therapy in particular focuses on incorporating family, religion/spirituality, community life, and the intersection of oppression (Nabors & Pettee, 2003). Similar to feminist practice, womanist and *mujerista* psychological practice is cognizant of power dynamics in the therapeutic relationship and honors women’s wisdom and perspective about themselves (Nabors & Pettee, 2003). Depending on the centrality of gendered cultural identity for a client, an awareness of womanist and *mujerista* psychologies can enhance the rapport in interracial therapeutic dyads between African American women or Latinas and clinicians of other ethnic backgrounds (Mitchell, 2003). Although clients are likely unfamiliar with the terminology of “womanist and *mujerista* psychologies,” the defining variables, priorities, and aims are likely to resonate with many African-descendant and Latina women. Womanist and *mujerista* psychologies in practice address the multiple roles of women and the intersection of their identities, and aim to make the invisible visible and the unspoken spoken. In addressing oppression therapeutically, womanist and *mujerista* psychologies recognize the need to address the themes of acknowledgment, sharing, shame and internalized oppression, grief, safety and self-care, anger, coping strategies, and resistance strategies (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2006).

Based on the Kantian constructivist perspective, which argues that people create reality, they do not merely discover it, womanist practice uses the stories women tell their therapists to begin the process of cocreating a new story that is empowering, authentic, and rewarding (C. B. Williams & Frame, 1999).

Womanist and mujerista practitioners must engage in self-reflection and be aware of their values, biases, and assumptions. They must be open to the reality of oppression in their clients' lives and approach the work from the perspective of holistic care and egalitarianism (C. B. Williams & Frame, 1999).

C. B. Williams and Frame (1999) advocated the adoption of cultural resources within therapy for the purposes of promoting survival, growth, and resilience. One of the approaches used in these therapeutic frames is narrative therapy, in which the therapist assists in the empowerment of clients' so they can cocreate life stories that serve their well-being. Another approach is bibliotherapy, which gives the woman the direct access to knowledge that can help transform their lives (C. B. Williams & Frame, 1999). Self-help books are beneficial, of course, but so are books that highlight the voices and experiences of Black women. Related to bibliotherapy is the use of storytelling within session. For religious and/or spiritual clients, the use of faith stories, such as biblical stories, can get them to reflect on a deeper level regarding their experiences and aims. Given collectivistic cultures, with confidentiality in mind, group counseling and the building of informal social support networks can also be quite beneficial. Finally, the womanist and mujerista practitioner connects her or his clients with community resources. Major cities often have numerous culturally affirming events, agencies, and services that may aid in the survival and growth of Black women and Latinas. These strategies, within a holistic therapeutic stance that integrates identity markers (e.g., race, gender) can assist in promoting the self-definition and agency of Black women and Latinas (Moradi & Subich, 2002). In the practice section of this volume (Part II), Sanchez-Hucles' chapter (Chapter 3) "Womanist Therapy With Black Women" and Gloria and Castellanos's chapter (Chapter 4) "Latinas Poderosas: Shaping Mujerismo to Manifest Sacred Spaces for Healing and Transformation" more fully describe the therapeutic process from a womanist and mujerista psychological perspective.

Social Action

Womanist and mujerista psychologies are twofold in that they both (a) celebrate and affirm African-descendant and Latina women and simultaneously (b) combat oppressive forces that threaten to drain and destroy communities, such as racism, sexism, and classism (C. B. Williams & Frame, 1999). To celebrate the identity of African-descendant and Latina women, womanists and mujeristas recognize and use cultural healing practices, such as community, emotional expressiveness, ritual, humor, music and dance, and folk wisdom (Williams & Frame, 1999). To combat various forms of oppression, womanists and mujeristas use community support, spirituality, activism, and the arts (Bryant-Davis, 2005; Hill Collins, 1990). Womanism and

mujerismo incorporate the arts of healing and agency, and define Black women and Latinas in ways the counter racism, sexism, and classism (Heath, 2006).

The psychology of womanist and mujerista activism is bidirectional, aimed at simultaneously empowering the African American and Latino community and transforming systems of oppression and discrimination (Hill Collins, 1998). The work directed at the community is intended to produce empowerment, value, dignity, and self-esteem, including racial and gender identity. This internal work highlights the fact that the individual and collective validation of the oppressed is in and of itself a revolutionary act. To dare to believe one is worthy of respect in the midst of systemic disrespect is an act of courageous resistance. Ramsey (2012) argued that tending to the hearts, minds, and spirits of community members reveals a unique approach to activism: caring activism. Tending to and caring for the marginalized are acts of caring activism. Caring activism not only seeks to prevent future violations but also provides care, provision, and healing for those who have already been wounded. Caring for the marginalized is the motivation for one's social activism and advocacy (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002, 2005). As one womanist activist, Crosby (1993), declared, "We are loving warriors!" Womanist and mujerista activists are observed in multiple domains protesting and working to create just change. These sites of protests have included government agencies, corporations, schools, and the public streets.

In the activism section of this volume, Bryant-Davis and Adams' chapter (Chapter 9) "A Psychocultural Exploration of Womanism, Activism, and Social Justice" and Castañeda-Sound, Duran, and Martinez's chapter (Chapter 10) "Mujeristas and Social Justice: *La Lucha es la Vida*" describe the psychology of womanist and mujerista activism. Recognizing the need to continue to teach and socialize individuals in the paradigms of womanist and mujeristas psychologies, Vasquez provides a challenging chapter (Chapter 11) on generativity and development womanist and mujerista leadership development.

Gaps and Limitations

There is minimal theoretical literature and empirical research on womanist and mujerista psychologies. As a result, much of the scholarship in this initial text is a result of building bridges between the sociological literature that names womanism and mujerismo and the psychological literature that often does not name these constructs directly. Further theoretical development of these psychologies are needed, as well as empirical exploration of their construction and application. Issues that remain about womanist and mujerista psychologies include which aspects are most salient, to whom these constructs are most applicable, the relationship between their defining

variables and mental health outcomes, and the clinical effectiveness of treatment models that emerge from these psychologies. Many of these issues are explored in this book, but we caution the reader that these psychologies are yet emerging and require ongoing attention, investigation, and critique. We also note that this text is missing an exploration of teaching womanist and *mujerista* psychologies, which is critical to the development and growth of the field. We must also acknowledge that, as with all edited volumes, there is some variation in the chapters regarding allocation of time devoted to an exploration of the interdisciplinary nature of these constructs, summary and critique of the current psychological literature, proposal of new conceptualizations, and personal experience. These variations serve to remind the reader of the realities of womanist and *mujerista* psychologies, which honor both multiple ways of knowing and the necessity of self-reflection within honest scholarship. As womanist and *mujerista* psychologies develop, sustained and respectful attention to intersectionality and the diverse experiences and ideologies of African-descendant and Latina women is needed. On that note, we must acknowledge that African American and Latina women who do not identify with womanist and *mujerista* priorities and values would likely not fit into frameworks of womanist and *mujerista* research, practice, and leadership development. However, some aspects within each subdiscipline may connect with nonaffiliated women. The priority of self-definition makes this reality both accepted and expected. Spiritual practices or artistic expression will not resonate at all with some African American and Latina women. Despite this fact, a woman may connect with other components within each psychology.

ROAD MAP

The contributors to this historic text discuss the interdisciplinary perspectives on their topic and then examine it from a womanist or *mujerista* vantage point. The chapter authors review and analyze the state of the field on the basis of psychological theory, empirical analyses, practice, and reflections on personal experience. The text starts the journey with two of the pillars of traditional psychology, research and practice. Wyche (Chapter 1) and Nygreen, Saba, and Moreno (Chapter 2) provide insight into womanist and *mujerista* research, respectively. After providing a sense of womanist and *mujerista* scholarship, the book turns to practice in Chapters 3 and 4. Sanchez-Hucles discusses the perspective of womanist healing and Gloria and Castellanos examine, from the viewpoint of *mujerista* sacred spaces, approaches to healing and well-being. Having addressed these core traditional tenets of psychology, the book then shifts to a psychological construct that is more unique to womanism and *mujerismo*: spirituality. Spirituality, which is considered foundational to both

psychologies is specifically spirituality in Chapters 5 and 6. In Chapter 5, Banks and Lee provide insight into womanist theology as it intersects with womanist psychology, and in Chapter 6, Comas-Díaz examines Latinas' sacred rituals, beliefs, and experiences. Next, the expressive arts, which highlight the value of self-definition, self-expression, and creativity in both psychologies, are investigated by Drake-Barnett, Garrett-Akinsanya, and Bryant-Davis (Chapter 7) and by Shapiro and Alcantara (Chapter 8). Finally and of great importance is the shift to social justice in Chapters 9 and 10, which is an ideal of both psychologies in the sense of the interconnection of all people and the necessity of an awareness of one's capacity to improve not only one's immediate circumstances but the life of humanity more globally. Bryant-Davis and Adams (Chapter 9) explore the intersection of social justice activism and the well-being of African-descendant women, and Castañeda-Sound, Duran, and Martinez (Chapter 10) analyze the role of social justice in *mujerista* psychology. Finally this volume centers on the generativity of womanist and *mujerista* psychologies as demonstrated through leadership development and engagement as explored by Vasquez in Chapter 11. The editors then conclude the book with some reflections on the significance of this work, as well as the areas that need continued development for womanist and *mujerista* psychologies to best enhance the psychosocial status of African-descendant and Latina women across the lifespan.

CONCLUSION

I know that, like every woman of the people, I have more strength than I appear to have.

—Evita Perón

When we speak we are afraid our words will not be heard or welcomed. But when we are silent, we are still afraid. So it is better to speak.

—Audre Lorde

Without progression, all movements come to an end. Womanist and *mujerista* psychologies must be taught and new leaders must perpetually be developed so that these psychologies can be promoted and preserved. The aim of this volume is both to define womanist and *mujerista* psychologies and to present them in such a way that the reader can adopt them, adapt them, and build onto them new ways of understanding and enhancing women and all people to live empowered lives. We as African-descended and Latina women are so much more than the stereotypes and stigmas that have been used to bind us, so we must know and speak who we are. We speak it to ourselves, speak to our daughters, and speak it to the world. In the knowing and the speaking, we are made whole.

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