



**LIBERATION BASED
HEALING CONFERENCE**

STAYING AWAKE & MOBILIZING HOPE

LBHC logo design by Kei

Southern University, New Orleans

School of Social Work

FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 3, 2017 &

SATURDAY | NOVEMBER 4, 2017



Silberman School of Social Work

HUNTER



CSUN

CALIFORNIA
STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTHRIIDGE

 **Portland State**
UNIVERSITY

STAYING AWAKE & MOBILIZING HOPE

DAY 1 – FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2017

WELCOME

8:45 – 9:00 **Rebecca Chaisson, PhD., LCSW,**
Dean, Southern University at New Orleans School of Social Work
Lisa Mims Devezin PhD., Chancellor, Southern University at New Orleans
Rhea Almeida, Co-Founder, Liberation Healing Conference

OPENING BLESSING

9:00 – 9:10 **Chief Rock- Jamie Blessing**
Carol Bebel, M.S. New Orleans, Essayist, Poet, Founder, Ashé

MORNING SESSIONS

9:10 – 9:30 ***Critical Pedagogy and Intersectionality***

Speaking power to truth and truth to power, this interactive exercise demonstrates the process of dialogue, inquiry and reflection as a way to raise critical consciousness around multiple identity markers like race, class, gender, ableness, and LGBTQ experiences and other targeted lived experiences through a lens of intersectionality. Students and faculty from CSUN, SUNO, and IFS will lead the dialogue and inquiry*

9:30-9:40 ***Reflections of Resistance to Coloniality from Puerto Rico***

AUTHOR| Mabel Quinones

9:40-10:45 ***The Legalization of Whiteness and Heteronormativity & Decolonizing the African Academe***

MODERATOR | Nocona Pewewardy

PRESENTERS | Jacqueline Battalora & Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni

This panel will ground our dialogue in some of the historical, legal and structural roots of coloniality both in the United States and global societies, Africa as one of many global experiments.

ABSTRACTS| Jacqueline Battalora's presentation is titled *"Human Divides: How the inventions of the heterosexual and of "white" people have divided Americans."* This keynote explores the invention of the human category "white" and that of the "heterosexual" in U.S. history; considering similarities and divergences. The material helps to raise patterns in the constructive work of creating human difference.

Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni's address carries out two tasks: The first is a decolonial genealogical and historical examination of black/African subject formation, subjection and subjectivity. The second is the articulation of various decolonial healing initiatives ranging from Garveyism, Ethiopianism, African Personality, Pan-Africanism, African Humanism, African Socialism, Black Consciousness Movements, African Nationalism, African Feminisms, African Renaissance to Rhodes Must Fall Movements. Liberation-based healings are here defined as part of re-membering/re-humanization after centuries of dismemberment/de-humanization.

10:45– 11:45

Breaking the Race and Gender Barriers of the New Orleans Mardi Gras Tradition & Christian Hegemony

MODERATOR | José Miguel Paéz

PRESENTERS | Kim Vas-Deville & Paul Kivel

This panel addresses the structural foundations of class, race and gender as it applies to the Baby Dolls in the Mardi Gras Tradition and it examines the white supremacist roots of Christian hegemony globally.

ABSTRACTS | **Kim Vas-Deville** will explore how Mardi Gras offers African American culture bearers a buffer to the negation of a subordinated people's need for recognition. This presentation explores the ways the community provides a transitional space for revelers to express themselves without judgement enabling their indulgence in the pleasure of looking and being seen.

Paul Kivel's presentation will look at how the 45th US president, his cabinet and administration, the House and Senate and the Supreme Court demonstrate all too clearly the continuing reign of the rich, white, and male Christian ruling class and its dominant Christian worldview. Before Europeans understood themselves as white they thought of themselves as Christians participating in a cosmic battle between good and evil against all those labeled Other. Today, Christian hegemony punishes the poor, destroys the environment, and contributes to our seemingly endless "war on terror". As our global crises of financial meltdown, war, racism and environmental destruction intensify, it is imperative that we dig beneath the surface of Christianity's benign reputation to understand and challenge how it shapes our beliefs, behavior, and our foreign and domestic policy.

11 :45 – 12:00

Lunch

12:00 - 1:00

Markelle Lagarde from Roots Marching Band & Mwende "FreeQuency" Katwiwa

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

1:00 - 2:30

Creative Pathways to Liberation: Healing wounds of Coloniality

MODERATOR | Willie Tolliver

PRESENTERS | Rhea Almeida, Lisa Dressner, & Diana Melendez Romero

This panel departs from western constructs of therapy and offers alternatives through healing circles of connection with individuals, families, children and communities. Therapeutic intentionality embraces expanded identities for stronger communities that embrace equity and liberation.

ABSTRACTS | Decolonizing theories and liberatory practices will be illustrated through a series of vignettes operationalizing accountability, critical consciousness and empowerment within the context of a power, privilege and oppression. These vignettes will include the trajectories of families looking for healing from the impact of structural, community and family violence, as well as navigating challenges across the life cycle.

2:30-3:00

Dialogue

3:00 – 3:15

BREAK

3:15-4:30

Research within a space of Decoloniality

MODERATOR | Alma Trinidad

PRESENTERS | Carolyn Tubbs, Katie Johnston-Goodstar, Elijah Been and Iliana Zephier

This panel offers two Participatory-Action Research (PAR) studies and a practice presentation with youth. Key concepts, such as critical consciousness and accountability will be unpacked through video and didactic presentation.

ABSTRACTS | **Katie Johnston-Goodstar, Elijah Been and Iliana Zephier** will present on “*Native American School Climate YPAR project.*” Poor graduation rates, truancy & tests results have been presented as indicators of a school crisis among Indigenous youth. This crisis, however, relies on ahistoric & deficit models of intervention, which imagine academic success as individual or family-level phenomenon. Drawing instead on concepts of educational debt (Ladson-Billings, 2006) & school push-out (Reyhner, 1991; Tuck, 2012), our project explores how schools are experienced by Indigenous youth. This presentation will cover 1) our YPAR crew; 2) Year 1 process & findings including: participatory & qualitative research and; 3) Year 2 process & findings including: construction & implementation of a self-designed supplementary AlterNative school climate study. Utilizing our findings on school climate & its impact on indicators of academic achievement (attendance/truancy, grades and graduation rates), our YPAR crew will lead an audience discussion for decolonized and liberatory education reform

Carolyn Tubbs will present on a clinical case study spanning three years illustrates liberation-based healing concepts applied to batterers' intervention and parental reunification, as well as global healing. It follows a client's trajectory through levels of critical consciousness as he navigates parental reunification and accountability processes within the context of a history of intimate partner violence. Stephanie Carpizo, LPC and graduate of IFS, contributed to her 2017 presentation.

4:30-4:45

Reflective voices: The interruption of Coloniality in the classroom, curriculum and practice

MODERATORS | Lisa Dressner, Willie Tolliver & José Miguel Paez

PRESENTERS | Students from SUNO, CSUN & IFS

4:45-5:15

SUNO Choir

DAY 2 - SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2017

OPENING

8:45 – 9:00

Welcome by Frenchy Haynes, Executive Director of Moving Education, Inc.
Freedom through Strategies for Liberation: James Baldwin & Nina Simone

9:00-9:15

Audience Dialogue

MORNING SESSION

9:15 – 10:15

Waking up to Unspoken Truths about Structural Violence

MODERATOR | José Miguel Paez

PRESENTERS | Patricia Boyett & Cornel Pewewardy

This panel will share ideas of Coloniality and Decoloniality centered in dominant spaces of education and humanities. They will highlight aspects of their scholarship and practice speaking truth to history that continues to be whitewashed. They will present ideas alive and emerging at the borders of freedom and liberation

ABSTRACTS | **Cornel Pewewardy** discussion on “*Postcolonial Ghost Dancing in the Age of despair: Trump Administration, White Supremacy, and Settler Nationalism*” looks to explore and initiate discussions and presentations regarding Indigenous resistance, decolonization, and healing in the time of Trump. In the midst of the chaos how can Indigenous Peoples mobilize and organize; continue protecting their lands, cultural rights, and sovereignty? How can Indigenous Peoples best express their discontent, resistance, and resilience through culture, art, history, environmental initiatives, tribal governance and education? How can American Indian and Alaska Native Studies programs prepare the next generations of Native youth to mindfully and intelligently resistance settler nationalism? What new, radical Indigenous theory and praxis must be adopted in order to disrupt and change the current Trump and settler nationalist discourse?

Patricia Boyett’s presentation is titled “*The American Labyrinth: Perpetual Crusades Against the White Supremacist Patriarchal Order.*” Over a century after civil rights activist and suffragist, Ida B. Wells launched a campaign against mob lynchings, a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia ended in the brutal beating of Deandre Harris and the murder of Heather Heyer. Although we often wish to see American history as a progressive and linear journey toward the creed of liberty and justice for all, the trajectory, fraught with obstacles and backlashes, is more like a labyrinth. This presentation will explore the roots and the persistence of the white supremacist patriarchal order, the civil rights and feminist movements that have risen against it, and the rising resistance in the contemporary era. The presentation will conclude with an exploration of how an intersectional, intergenerational, and inclusive nonviolent path might lead us through the dark passages and out of the labyrinth at last.

10:15-10:45

Film Preview: Intersection to Dialogue

Director | Angela Tucker

10:45- 11:45

Frenchy Haynes Founder and Executive Director of Moving Education, Inc. in collaboration with Dancing Grounds

MODERATOR | Farooq Alihassan

SOLO PERFORMANCE | Frenchy Haynes

Middle school students will perform “Prayer” to the music of Rapper DMX and High School students will perform “Strange Fruit” which is set to a children’s choral version of the song “Strange Fruit.” Mr. Haynes will dance his new solo “Come Out” which is set to an original score composed by Mr. Haynes and Leyland Simmons incorporating the music of Steve Reich and Spoken Narratives.

11:45-12:00

Audience Dialogue

12:00-1:00

Lunch

Resisting Dis-abledness and Defying Challenges

Video Performance – Michel Petrucciani (1962-1999)

MODERATOR | Sara Koenig, CSUN

PRESENTER | Michael L. Benjamin-Robinson, MSW, LMSW

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

1:00-2:00

Decolonizing Gendered Spaces

MODERATOR | Willie Tolliver

PRESENTERS | Bamby Salcedo & Cherice Harrison-Nelson

This panel will unpack the gender binary and the constraints imposed by a society influenced by White Supremacy, Patriarchy, Corporate Capitalism and Coloniality. This critical dialogue will support expanding identities through multiple lived experiences.

ABSTRACTS | **Bamby Salcedo** will dialogue around collaborating and a connecting across various borders and mediating intersections of race, gender identity, sexuality, age, social class, HIV+ status, immigration status and more- which create challenges but deliver spaces of liberation.

Cherice Harrison- Nelson's presentation "If You Don't Like What the Big Queen Says, Just..." is an exploration of the negotiated feminine presence in a male led warrior tradition that is rooted in West African cultural practices. Historically, the tradition supports self-actualization for individual practitioners and community members through the appropriation of public thoroughfares for ritual processions.

2:00-3:30

Disturbing the Western Project of Psychology Across disciplines of Social Work, Marriage and Family and Counseling Education

MODERATOR | Carolyn Tubbs

PRESENTERS | Willie Tolliver, José Miguel Paez, & Alma Trinidad

This panel will highlight how to create and uphold decolonized classrooms, where learning can be a contiguous space between and among faculty and students. Introducing scholarship from the margins to standard curriculums the panelists discuss the challenges and gains they have experienced.

ABSTRACTS | Building upon the working framework of critical Indigenous pedagogy of place, as a Pinay scholar warrior of kapu aloha, the classroom becomes a space for dismantling white supremacy by critiquing the essence of epistemology, and visioning healing practices that centralize the voices of community. Through **Alma Trinidad's** experiences in teaching in social work education and child and family studies, as well as general education, case examples and key lessons of integrating critical Indigenous pedagogy of place in teaching and mentoring will be provided. Implications on higher education among the helping professions will be discussed. **José Miguel Paez** will present on "Disobeying the Academy: Finding Decolonial Options." Bernal and Villalpando (2002) state "higher education has created an apartheid of knowledge where the dominant Eurocentric epistemology is believed to produce 'legitimate' knowledge, in contrast to the 'illegitimate' knowledge that is created by all other epistemological perspectives" (p. 177). This presentation focuses on how teachers and students try to engage in what Mignolo refers to as "epistemic disobedience" the process of de-linking from dominant Eurocentric epistemology. Our hope is to create a learning space that points us to "decolonial options", centering on the forms of knowledge and healing from the perspectives of those who

have been historically marginalized, invisibilized, and de-legitimized. We will identify strategies used in and out of the classroom working to create a critically conscious and accountable learning space where students and teachers address the effects of historical trauma, and feel empowered to reclaim identities and histories. Student perspectives are offered throughout the presentation illustrating the wounds of coloniality as well as the impact of decolonial thinking on their lives and professional practice.

Willie Tolliver's presentation will present on his experiences in Social Work education. Carter G. Woodson observed that oppressed people could not expect majority education institutions to provide tools to liberate the oppressed. In our school consumers of our services (students) were the precursors for disrupting the western project of psychology. Today there is a two-semester mandatory course for first-year MSW students in which students acquire knowledge, skill, and practices to disrupt oppression at the micro and macro levels.

3:30-3:45

Dialogue Break

3:45-4:25

The Cost of Coloniality: Our bodies, spirits and our lands

MODERATOR | Diana Melendez Romero

PRESENTERS | Alexis Francisco & Ben Robertson

This panel reflects the current state of urban neocolonialism and the mechanism of subconscious self-subjugation and links our physical, spiritual, and emotional health to the land, safe and sustainable environments and peace-embracing lifestyles.

ABSTRACTS | As a member of the panel, **Ben Robertson** will present information related to the current state of urban neocolonialism and the mechanism of subconscious self-subjugation. Finally, Dr. Robertson will present time-tested tools essential in the liberation of subjugated population, particularly Africans in America, minds and the subsequent freeing of the social, political, and economic oppressor from their perch of the domination complex.

Alexis Francisco's presentation will focus on how Colonization thrives on severing our connection to our lands, histories and ancestral wisdom. Our commitment to decolonial resistance must include recovering the ancestral healing practices and spiritual wisdom of our people, particularly in the face of environmental degradation and ongoing systemic violence. We must look to models of community care and healing that have sustained communities outside of traditional western models of allopathic and therapeutic care, such as localized earth based healing modalities and spiritual communities as sites of organized care and action grounded in theologies of liberation.

CLOSING REMARKS

4:25- 4:30

Rhea Almeida & Rebecca Chaisson

CLOSING PERFORMANCE

4:30-5:00

Performance by **Gay Men's Choir**

Frenchy Haynes is moderator/coordinator for all arts performances

Host of Ceremonies - Dr. Ira Neighbors

"Revolution is not a one time event"

— Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches (1984)